5-13-47

new masses

WHO BARS THE JEWS?

NEW YORK TIMES,
MAY 3, 1947.

The United States joined Britain yesterday in defeating a proposal that the United Nations General Assembly let the Jewish Agency for Palestine state its views at a plenary session. The vote in the General Committee, which met in Flushing Meadow, Queens, was 8 to 3.

The Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Poland were in the minority. Brazil, Ecuador and Honduras

PALESTINE: ANGLO-AMERICAN BETRAYAL

A report on the UN debate by Charles Abrams

THE RICKSHAW
by HOWARD FAST

THE FORGOTTEN SEX
by Elizabeth Gurley Flynn

MAY 13, 1947 15¢ IN CANADA 20¢

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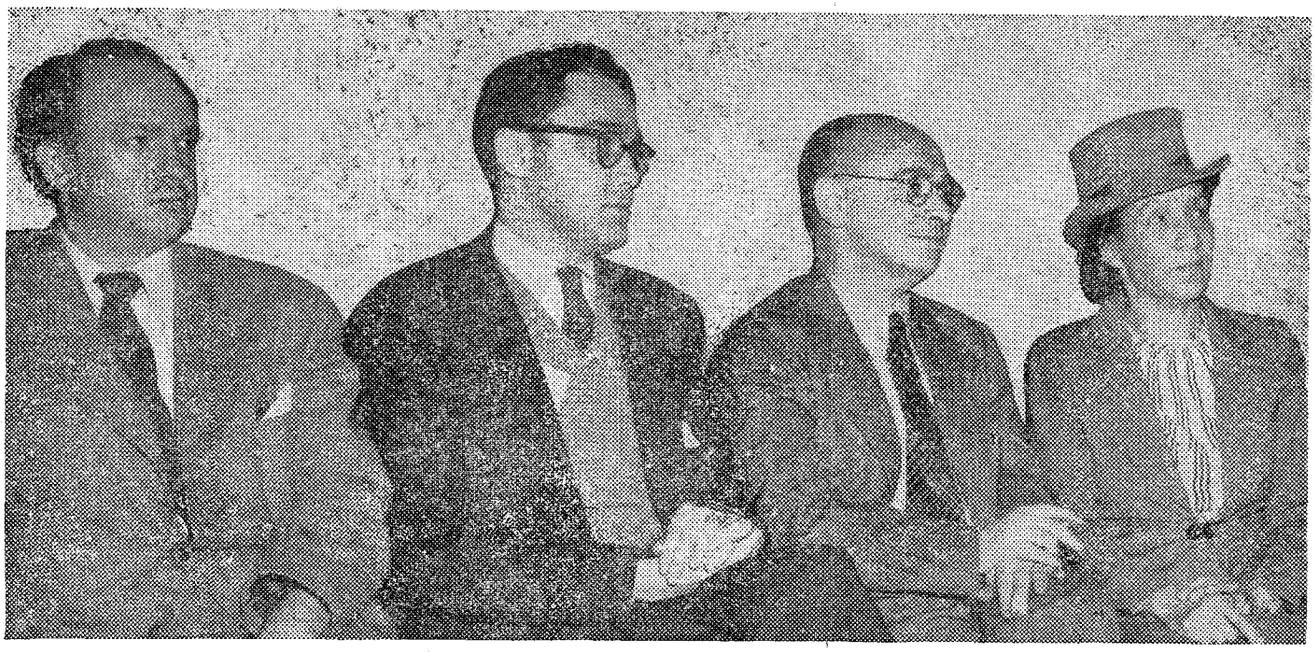

Left to right: **John Stuart, Arnaud D'Usseau, Gerhart Eisler, Shirley Graham.**

WHAT a meeting! Old Webster Hall had to bulge to hold that crowd of readers and friends of NEW MASSES who filled every seat and overflowed all around the edges at last week's emergency meeting to save NM. They listened to speakers like Dr. Harry F. Ward, Howard Fast, Shirley Graham, Max Weber, Arnaud D'Usseau, Councilman Peter V. Cacchione and Gerhart Eisler tell what NEW MASSES meant to them and to the entire progressive movement. They joined in the singing with Pete Seeger, and they contributed more than $1,200 (plus $300 from a group of friends in Minneapolis) to keep their magazine on the firing line. It was one of those meetings that give people the lift that enables them to do the impossible.

Well, NEW MASSES has been doing the impossible for years: surviving despite the boycott against us by large advertisers and the lack of financial angels. This year we've got to do it again—and more. This is written a few days before the financial deadline we told you about: $5,000 by Thursday, May 8, or we don't go to press with next week's issue. In the past two weeks we have raised $3,348. Unless much more comes in, there may be no NM next week.

That's a grim postscript to our enthusiastic meeting, but it's the reality we face. Not counting those who were at our meeting, only about 1,100 readers have contributed to our fund drive. Are you one of the thousands who has overlooked sending in your donation? The Rankins, Hearsts and J. Edgar Hoovers would like to see this magazine destroyed, but NEW MASSES is determined to live. Will you please dig into your pockets and your friends' pockets and rush help today?

THE EDITORS.

(*Fill out coupon on page* 29)

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LONDON:

Why we welcomed WALLACE

His visit afforded valuable contact between him and the people in England who see that the Truman-Bevin policy leads toward disaster. The behind-the-scenes rivalry of Britain and America.

By DEREK KARTUN

London (by mail).

MR. HENRY WALLACE'S visit here has served a number of highly useful purposes. It has, in the first place, given us a first-hand knowledge of and pleasant personal acquaintance with a distinguished American who in an atmosphere of mounting hysteria and anti-democratic frenzy has known how to keep his head level. It has afforded a valuable contact between Mr. Wallace and those people in the Labor Party here who believe with him that the inept and desperate machinations of the Truman-Bevin alliance can lead to disaster if they are permitted to continue unchecked. It has given us a glimpse of what is too easily, though understandably, forgotten here: that there is an America other than that of Rep. Rankin, Matthew Woll and the irrepressible Mr. Bullitt, and that this other America is articulate and possessed of a democratic world outlook. And it has focused our attention on American foreign policy as it affects Britain, at a time when there has been a dangerous tendency to consider it exclusively in terms of what effect it will have on Russia.

As showers of imperialist dollars rain down upon the luckless heads of the Greeks and Turks, it is perhaps useful to put forward a British view of American policy today. The danger for us in Britain in recent weeks has been, primarily, that of reacting to the Greek-Turkish affair in precisely the way the organizers of that policy and of its dramatic presentation to the world have desired us to. The drum-rolling and trumpet-blowing, the mobilization of the usual bevy of hack publicists throughout the world was enough to provoke in the minds of many people the conviction that if war was not here today it was at least, in Colonel McCormick's words, inevitable and uncomfortably close. Many people found themselves saying what the Chicago *Tribune* and the Hearstlings were saying themselves and wanted everyone else to say with them.

Many people suddenly forgot that the gloomy, fatalistic and mystical thinking which goes with talk of inevitable war (when every really decisive aspect of world relationships indicates the contrary) is just the sort of thinking that the propaganda machine which recently swung into action was designed to produce. As the various political leaders went before the Senate committee and delivered their views on Russia and Eastern Europe with all the restraint and diplomatic finesse of a gaggle of enraged and warlike geese, people here understandably said that this was a virtual declaration of war against Russia; that the fundamental contradictions between America and the Soviet Union were at last asserting themselves and that this was both the main immediate and the main long-term problem of world politics. This view was particularly enhanced in this country by President Truman's declaration at Waco, Texas, that he preferred private enterprise to peace. This worried people in Britain, most of whom prefer peace to private enterprise. It was taken as part of the evidence which established the existence of a Soviet-American antagonism due, at any moment, to flare into bloody and quite inevitable conflict.

BUT is that the immediate danger? And is it, for all practical purposes, inevitable that war should break out?

It is worth remembering that the situation which produced both the First and the Second World Wars was a "classical" situation of monopoly capitalism. Britain, France and the US had between them divided the world. Germany, Italy and Japan, late in the field, felt with uncontrollable acuteness the need for markets, materials and fields for investment. This was the basic reason for the outbreak of these wars—the reason without which the great capitalist powers would not have fought. That certain sections of the ruling class in Britain wished to turn the Second World War into a crusade against Russia—and thus against the development toward people's democracy and socialism throughout the world—is undeniable. But primarily the British and American ruling class fought Germany because Germany threatened their privileged position in the world. The British and American people fought the war to preserve their democratic liberties and their independence. And World War II, as everyone now knows, had the effect of eliminating Germany, Italy and Japan as serious competitors of American, British and French capitalism. It did this, but it also did more. It so weakened

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the economies of Britain and France that America was left overwhelmingly the strongest capitalist power, with possibilities of further expansion at the expense of her allies, and—most importantly—the imperative need so to expand.

It thus emerges that the sharpest external conflict in the capitalist world today is between America and Britain. Britain is the strongest of America's competitors and is also the power whose further weakening will offer America the greatest and most necessary prizes. Naturally, while the conditions for the acting out of this latest world drama were being developed, and during the early stages of the drama itself, the existence of the Soviet Union became a major factor in American calculations. Naturally the American leaders, fearful of the economic and political strength of Russia, would do everything in their power to weaken her. Naturally, they would use this heaven-sent bogey from the steppes to distract the minds of the American workers from their own pressing problems and the minds of the British from the economic offensive which was being prepared against them by Wall Street.

But the main immediate concern of American capital, and the main concern for a long while to come, must be expansion—and rapid expansion—to absorb her goods, invest her stockpiles of dollars and replenish her dwindling oil barrels. This expansion can only be easily, rapidly and to some extent peacefully accomplished at the expense of the British Empire. If in so doing America can intimidate Russia, "contain" her, in Walter Lippmann's meaning of the word, and build her up in the minds of the American people as a menacing ogre against which warlike and aggressive efforts must be made, she will be combatting communism as well as she knows how, keying up her own people to support a number of imperialist adventures in the name of "safeguarding democracy," and fool the British people into thinking they have an ally against some obscure Bolshevik menace.

ALL the evidence indicates that this process has started and will continue. In Greece the plum which Mr. Bevin has been raising so lovingly with his occupation policy is now to be plucked by the Americans. Today US battleships sail up and down the Mediterranean, where for so many years the British navy has been unchallenged by anything more impressive than Mussolini's improvident torpedo boats. American policy here betrayed itself by demanding that Cyprus—a key British base—be joined to the new Americanized Greece (though this went a little too far and, after British protest, was temporarily dropped).

In China the most striking economic fact in the Kuomintang area is the total disappearance of British economic influence. The market has been captured for the US and there is every sign that the Kuomintang puppets are to keep it that way.

The appointment of Mr. Culbertson, a top State Dept. official, to be Charge d'Affaires in Madrid indicates that Spain is next on the list. Already in the Dominions the struggle against the British economic positions has gone far and will go further. Canada today has a very large sector of her economy controlled by American capital, where twenty years ago British capital was the more important. American policy at the Geneva trade conference was, and at the subsequent economic conferences of the UN will be, directed toward ending empire preference and the protection of the sterling balances. President Truman and Mr. Will Clayton, Assistant Secretary of State in charge of economic affairs, have already said so. And their additional remarks about freedom of world trade mean, in the present situation, that Britain is to be eliminated as a serious world competitor.

Now it is of course perfectly true that important groups in America, and also in Britain, would like war against Russia if they knew how to get it without provoking revolt at home and abroad. It is true that if they thought they could drag their peoples into war tomorrow and finish it quickly and easily they would try to do so. But such a war cannot be waged easily or successfully. And so these people today are advocating certain intermediate measures; are preparing the atmosphere for war; are making war talk into a commonplace, just as the Nazi underground in Germany today and General de Gaulle in France are trying to spread this fantastic myth of the inevitability of war.

That American policy is criminally dangerous and could lead to war is undeniable. That Mr. Bevin's insensate policy makes it easier for the wilder American politicians is equally true. No one will deny the truth of the late General Smedley Butler's remark, in a different context, that "the trouble with America is that the dollar gets restless when it earns only six percent. It goes overseas to get 100 percent. The flag follows the money—and the soldiers follow the flag." This is true and it constitutes the mortal danger of the policy in Greece.

But having said that it is also necessary to reiterate that imperialist wars do not break out unless the fundamental economic urge is there and can be satisfied in no other way. And since Wall Street clearly considers it is possible to effect the necessary expansion at the expense of the British Empire, one cannot say that in the present period the conflict between Russia and America, even though fundamental, is the main characteristic of the world scene.

Mr. Wallace in America, and the Labor "rebels" here, are perfectly right to stress the dangers inherent in the Truman policy and the absolute need to get agreement with Russia at UN and on the problem of Germany. They are right to warn against the warmongers and to seek to lay the Russian bogey. But it is a grave and a dangerous mistake to talk of the American drive toward war with Russia as if this were the immediate realizable aim of the American ruling class and, more particularly, an irresistible development before which the common people are floundering helplessly. It is certain that if people in Britain really took this view they would have become politically paralyzed and the powerful movement we now have against Bevinism would never have developed. And it seems to us equally certain that should this view ever get a firm grip upon the minds of the American people, it would be worth a thousand atom bombs to the militarists.

What the present complex and dangerous situation calls for is a clear understanding of the conflict between America and Britain as the main immediate factor in the world scene. It is clear that this view is held by the great Marxists of the Chinese Communist Party, and certainly by the Marxist movement throughout Europe. But the situation calls also for the most strenuous efforts to stop the anti-Soviet drive which is preventing Europe from settling down in peace and is keeping the whole world in anxiety and fear. We were glad to welcome Mr. Wallace to this country because he is playing such a notable part in this vital task.

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THE FEMININE FERMENT

What has happened to Rosie the riveter—and all the "angels with dirty faces"—in postwar America? A discussion on the fight for women's rights.

By ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN

"AREN'T women part of our civilization?" What a question for NEW MASSES readers, of all people, to ask themselves when your recent series of ten forums on "American Civilization" was in progress. The topics were varied and important—trends in art, literature, religion, science, Negro life, foreign policy, economic outlook, labor. But every speaker was male and there was not a single lecture on trends among women. This was a disappointing oversight.

Your women readers certainly know something of these special trends and how important it is for NEW MASSES to deal with them adequately. There are two organizations in America spending thousands of dollars to reach and influence women—the Republican Party and the National Association of Manufacturers. Since early in 1944, the latter has issued a beautiful free six-page "Program Notes" for women's clubs. Written simply, rather light and gay, affecting impartiality and tolerrance, it makes "free enterprise" appear the best of all possible systems and labor a selfish monster attacking it. Communists are anathema, of course. Radio announcers of women's programs use these notes. Its "Editor's Mailbox" shows it reaches women everywhere, most of whom are obviously intelligent women, who are anxious to know about government, unions, peace, women's rights, etc. These two powerful organizations, representing big business in America, appreciate and are out to exploit the decisive political power of women, especially in the 1948 elections.

We must not be outdone by such reactionaries in estimating what American women represent politically. They are 50.6 percent of the total population; 46,000,000 are eligible to vote (a larger female electorate than in any other country in the world except the Soviet Union); 16,000,000 are wage-earners and 37,000,000 are homemakers. Over 10,000,000 women belong to some type of women's organization and over 3,500,000 are union members. They demonstrated their ability to work in all trades and professions during the war. True, women belong to all the groups your forum dealt with, but in addition to the general trends you discussed there are special issues and problems of women within each group, shared also by women of the other groups, which contribute to common trends among women.

Margaret Mead, a woman scientist, writes in *Fortune* magazine for December on "What Women Want." She says, "More than a quarter of the women in the US are disturbed, articulately, definitely disturbed about their lot—as women." Dr. Mead is a distinguished anthropologist, a wife and mother. She is speaking from the personal experiences of her group, the underpaid women college professors, who carry the same double burden of a job and housekeeping as the factory women workers, who are likewise harassed with this feature of their lot—as women. She says further, "This disturbance takes two forms, discontent with the present conditions of homemaking for the woman with children, and confusion about how a woman is to look at herself: should she see herself as a person primarily or as a woman?"

How to reconcile an outside job with the duties of a home—that is a never-ending problem. To be forced to give up the job, no matter how necessary or satisfying it is, in order to devote one's full time to the home and children, is a hard choice for many alert young women today, who need or want to work and who resent the isolation of the home as constituted under capitalism.

THE Women's International Democratic Federation at its congress in Paris in November, 1945 (where there were delegates from forty-one countries, including America), set forth a general program for the women of the world: (1) for permanent peace, the annihilation of fascism and the extension of democracy; (2) for the political, economic, legal and social rights of women; (3) for their welfare as mothers and for the well-being, health and education of children.

To what extent are American women cooperating? Are we keeping pace with the women of the Soviet Union, of the liberated countries, of England and of the Far East? They expect much from us, and rightly so, since we did not suffer actual physical warfare, with bombings, occupation, imprisonments, execution, starvation, torture of old and young, enforced labor and wholesale impairment of health, which so many of them and their families endured. Are women sufficiently aware of the pattern of fascism within our own country—Red-baiting, labor-baiting, anti-Semitism, and theories of racial superiority, especially in the South? Do women recognize fascist ideology as it expresses itself in the growing "back to the home" attitude toward women? Are women sufficiently alert to manifestations of white chauvinism toward Negro men and women and of male chauvinism toward Negro and white women? Let us frankly answer some of these questions to help all of us do a better job as citizens of our country and inhabitants of one world.

Discussions of larger national and international issues should not, however, obscure the many grievances which women want to "blow their tops" about in the hope of securing attention and help in solving them. These grievances are not just "gripes." They are serious obstacles to a full utilization of the capacities and capabilities of women in all fields. The semi-humorous attitude which even the best of men can assume in discuss-

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ing "the woman question" maddens women or puts them on the defensive. It is an expression, often quite unconsciously, of the age-old traditional attitude of male superiority of which Lenin said: "We must root out the old 'master' idea to its last and smallest root." One of his tests of Communists was "their mentality as regards women." Just as underestimation of the just demands of the Negro people can weaken the unity of all progressive forces, we must realize that the fight for the full rights of women is an important part in winning all democratic rights. The many similarities in the status of women and the Negro people helped to bring them closer together a century ago in the early abolitionist and women's suffrage movements. There are similarities in some of their demands today. Like the immediate demands of labor much can be secured through organized action and power, although the complete emancipation of labor, of the Negro people, and of women, will only be realized under socialism.

WOMEN have gained a far larger horizon in the last century, since their advent into public industry. They followed their work (spinning, weaving, sewing, etc.) out of the house into factories. It meant a pay envelope and new freedom of motion as a person. What a blessing for women, single women especially, young and old, the right to work outside the home and be paid for one's services, was, we can hardly realize today.

Frederick Engels wrote in 1884: "The emancipation of women is primarily dependent on the reintroduction of the whole female sex into the public industries." But he spoke emphatically of the many contradictions that plague women under capitalist control of industry as follows: "Women remain excluded from public production and cannot earn anything if they fulfill their duties in private service of their families or they are unable to attend their family duties if they wish to participate in public industries and earn a living independently" (*Origin of the Family*). This is as true in the US today as when Engels wrote it sixty-three years ago. But it is not true in the Soviet Union, where motherhood is recognized as a social function and constitutional provisions are guaranteed for the care of mother and child, as well as for the exercise of equal rights "in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life."

Under capitalism many brave and resolute American pioneers carried on long and bitter struggles for those rights women enjoy today, including coeducation, the right to vote, to employment after marriage, to own one's earnings, to travel alone, speak in public, to eat in restaurants without an escort, to become a doctor, lawyer, college professor, diplomat, member of Congress and to wear clothes compatible with outside work and an outdoor life. (If you don't think modern clothes are sensible, take a look at what they wore up to 1900.) As Dr. Mead puts it, "They can hold jobs, join unions, own businesses, sign checks, run for office, wear pants in public places." But there are many handicaps which still harass women. There are legal disabilities, hangovers of old British common law, on our statute books. Some are obsolete, many are actively discriminatory. Women are excluded from jury duty in sixteen states; in practically all but seven states, a wife's domicile is that of her husband, which causes loss of legal rights, even of the vote, to wives separated from or deserted by their husbands.

Laws vary in relation to the status of wives under wills, and in relation to inheritance, custody of children, common property, independent business or earnings, family support, right to work, etc. In Massachusetts, a married

O VOS OMNES

by Robert Brittain

I am haunted by the hands of Dolores Ibarruri,
Emptied forever of love.

She who was mother and wife
Is widowed, childless;
Sirius over the steppes is small and lustreless
Against the memory of Vega in Galicia.

Her peasant hands,
Shaped to the fit of tools by the fumbling centuries,
Remember how they held the love of a man
As a girl might hold a nightingale
Throbbing between her palms;
And how the weight of her son,
Swung on the open hand, pulled at her arms,
Tightening her breasts when she lifted him.

And as love's limits widened
They learned the larger gestures of friendliness.
They were always filled, always alive and laboring:
They knew how a miner grips his pick-handle,
How a seamstress holds her needle with finger and thumb,
The coarse pull of a rope, the pressure of a gear shift,
And the sting of a board struck with the fist down.

Love grown wide and stubborn as La Mancha,
Love engulfing her land and its patient people,
Taught her at last fierce and passionate motions:
The proud clench of defiance, the gestured sneer,
The challenge of out-flung arms.
And taught her the words:
"It is better to die on your feet
Than to live on your knees."

I am haunted by the hands of La Pasionaria,
Filled forever with love.

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woman is not permitted to teach. Non-wage-earning wives are humiliated by actual economic dependence. Working wives and mothers work a double day. There is a lack of opportunity and of equality in training, placement, upgrading, seniority and remuneration in industry, the professions, arts and sciences, in schools, colleges, hospitals, churches, factories, offices, unions, civil service and government posts. After twenty-six years of women's suffrage, we elected seven Congresswomen in 1946, four of them Republicans. In twenty-five state legislatures, 140 Republican women and thirty-eight Democrats answer the roll-call, a total of 178 for the whole US.

There is a shameful lag in the nomination of women, especially on progressive slates. Few efforts are made to elect women to office in city, state and nation, even where they are nominated as a token gesture. I asked a Communist woman member of the Constituent Assembly in France how it happened that so many of them were elected. She replied, "It is because our Party nominates us in districts where they know a Communist will surely be elected." The Soviet Union, England and all the liberated countries have surpassed us in the number of women in their legislative bodies, as heads of government departments, and engaged in public affairs generally. South American countries are forging ahead too in this respect.

There isn't a woman on the executive board of the AFL or of the CIO, nor is there a single woman vice-president. The International Ladies Garment Workers Union, with eighty percent of its members women, has one woman on its executive board, and she is not a garment worker. Elizabeth Hawes paints an unflattering but unfortunately truthful picture in her book *Hurry Up Please, It's Time* of the United Auto Workers' Union in their treatment of women members and organizers. Now that the war is over the "angels with dirty faces" who worked in shipyards, airplane and munitions factories, who kept 'em flying, sailing, fighting, who were commended by the President, encouraged in the press, praised in fulsome union convention resolutions, are ignored, pushed around, told to go home and forget it. The veterans should certainly sympathize with the women who worked overtime, slept little, were jammed in crowded busses, rushed home to empty stores, hungry kids and dirty houses, had another day's work to do there, and daily wrote cheerful letters to the guy sweating it out somewhere in a foxhole. They are both getting the runaround by "a grateful country" today.

THERE were 10,500,000 women working before the war. Women workers interviewed in ten war production areas on their postwar plans said they planned to continue working after the war and gave economic necessity as their reason. Yet, with over 16,000,000 women employed in the US today, fewer women union organizers are employed, fewer women are placed on union committees, elected to office, sent as delegates to conventions, even from unions with a high ratio of women membership. A job of "organizing the unorganized" is yet to be done among the millions of working women. It will not be done until labor leaders realize that women are in industry to stay, that their employment was not a wartime emergency, and that they are not going back to the home *en masse*. By 1950 it is estimated twenty-eight in every one hundred workers will be women. Women can be readily organized if serious attention is given by the unions to the standards of working time, wages, health and safety for women. Equal pay for equal work, minimum wage laws, seniority rights are important demands. Vacations with pay, service of hot meals in plants, child care centers begun in wartime could be increased today if the unions put their strength behind these great needs.

Fighting for these issues would organize all women workers. Unions have done a great deal for women workers, but not enough. Until all of them are organized as equal members in the unions the job is incomplete. Women workers are sore, bewildered, disappointed at the letdown of the unions in dealing with their problems since the war. We must warn the trade union leaders against storing up a reservoir of resentment, even animosity, among women workers and women in the home, by neglect or indifference toward these millions of women workers.

Let us remind ourselves of the words of Lenin in 1920. In the midst of civil war, blockade, famine, Clara Zetkin described him as fatigued and worried. Nevertheless he took time to discuss with her at great length the importance of work among women. (The discussion is published as a pamphlet by International, and if you have not already read it, I recommend you do so.) Lenin had a real sympathy with women in their struggle for equality. He said passionately, "We hate, yes, hate everything and will abolish everything which tortures and oppresses the woman worker, the housewife, the peasant woman, the wife of the petty trader, yes, and in many cases the women of the possessing class. . . . Every day of the existence of the Soviet state proves more clearly that we cannot go forward without the women. . . . We are dealing with millions of women. Our Russian Party will be in favor of all proposals and measures to help to win them. If they are not with us they will be against us. We must always think of that. . . . The women masses, we must get them, whatever difficulties we encounter in doing so."

Ignoring the special problems that beset women is incompatible with

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Marxism. Karl Marx in 1868 wrote approvingly of the American Labor Union Congress "in that it treated working women with complete equality," and he added, "anybody who knows anything of history knows *that great social changes are impossible without the feminine ferment.* Social progress can be measured exactly by the social position of the fair sex."

THIS American tradition referred to by Marx is worth remembering. William Sylvis in 1868 appointed Kate Mullaney the first woman labor organizer in America. He successfully fought to seat Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton as delegates from the Woman's Suffrage Association to the ALU Congress. Frederick Douglass, the great Negro leader, attended the first Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, N. Y. in 1846, and seconded the motion of Mrs. Stanton that "it was the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right of the elective franchise." It was greeted with a storm of ridicule and abuse in the press of that day.

Lenin and Marx understood the importance of reaching the women. The GOP understands it and will try to hand the women a gold brick wrapped up like a box of candy in this session of Congress — the so-called Equal Rights Amendment. In the battle against anti-labor legislation, let us not forget that this bill as it now stands will cut the heart out of all progressive labor legislation for women workers. Sylvis, Douglass, Debs and other great American men were allies of the women and understood the importance of their needs. The NAM is planning to channelize women's activities along anti-labor lines. If we do not want to see such efforts successful, then all pro-labor forces must do a bigger and better job in reaching the women than they have done thus far. If we want to stop fascism in this country, we must arouse the women. Progressive political action for 1948 must include the education and organization of women voters, who can swing any election. Women will be a dynamic force when aroused to fight for peace, security, democracy, for themselves and for their families.

Not to reach them immediately in today's life and death struggle is criminal negligence.

MEET HANNS EISLER

"I would be delighted to testify," said Hanns Eisler proudly. An interview with the composer.

By ALVAH BESSIE

I'M VERY much afraid that when the rampaging inquisitors of the House Un-American Committee visit this coast to carry out (among other announced objectives) their "investigation" of Gerhart Eisler's brother Hanns, their findings will not furnish the Hearst press with the sort of headlines it would like to write. So after talking to Hanns Eisler for an hour and a half in his home on the beach out here, I decided to write some headlines for it. Being honest headlines they would run like this:

COMPOSER WRITES MUSIC!

AUSTRIAN COMPOSER CONFESSES HE ALWAYS HATED HITLER!!

MODERN COMPOSER ADMITS HE LOVES HIS OWN BROTHER!!!

HANNS EISLER INSISTS GERHART EISLER "SINCERE"!!!!

They're not very good headlines, are they? Well, I will have to be resigned, in such a case, to not being hired by the Hearst press until I can do better.

Hanns Eisler, whose brother Gerhart has been accused of "perjury, passport fraud, income tax evasion and plotting to overthrow the United States government," is a world-famous composer. His music has been published and performed in practically every civilized country in the world, and while he has written symphonic music, chamber music and orchestral scores of all kinds, he is perhaps most famous for his songs.

Since 1938 Hanns Eisler (the double "n" comes from his real name, Johannes — Un-American Committee please note the deception!) has lived in the United States. Here, on the outskirts of Los Angeles, he lives quietly with his charming dark-haired wife, Lou, and composes. He is also reading the galley-proofs of a book he has written in collaboration with Dr. T. W. Adorno, titled *Composing for the Movies,* which Oxford University Press will shortly publish. "It is a study," says Eisler, "of the new phenomenon of industrial culture—from the point of view of a composer."

Then he made a significant confession. "Since my other music does not bring me an adequate living, I also write musical scores for the motion picture studios." The reader may recall his scores for John Steinbeck's *The Forgotten Village,* for *None But the Lonely Heart, Hangmen Also Die, Deadline at Dawn* and *The Spanish Main.* Currently he is completing a score for the new RKO film *So Well Remembered,* from the James Hilton novel, which he says is a magnificent film. He advised me not to miss it.

At this point in the interview Mrs. Eisler appeared with coffee and an excellent cake and we dropped the interview for an entertaining discussion of how a composer goes about writing music for a film. I would like to transcribe all of it, for it is very interesting and Eisler was very witty about it, but for the benefit of the House Committee I must continue the interview. It may save them some time—and the taxpayer some money.

Hanns Eisler, who is short, almost completely bald and inclined to be stout, walked up and down in the pleasant room facing the Pacific and emphasized what he had to say by flourishing a cigarette holder. (The burning tip of the cigarette was *red!*)

"You ask about my brother Gerhart," he said. (He has a formal way of speaking.) "I can tell you this," and he went on slowly, carefully and with considerable emphasis: "I love and admire my brother. He is a sincere man. He is a gentle and courageous man. I think that the campaign against him is the beginning of a campaign against the liberal and progressive forces in this country. It does not surprise me. I have seen such campaigns before—in Germany. Before 1933.

"It was the same in Germany. The campaign against the liberals, progres-

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sives, the Communists. There—and here—it was designed to convince the people that liberal ideas, progressive ideas are of foreign origin; that liberals, progressives, Communists are agents of foreign powers. Reactionaries always think in such terms. If a hungry man says he is hungry it couldn't be his *own* idea—somebody must have told him! It succeeded in Austria and Germany. I hope it will not succeed here."

Hanns Eisler sat down and sipped his coffee. "I can say this about my brother Gerhart. I *know* that when he came to the United States he came not as an agent for anybody. He came as a very sick man from a concentration camp. He went immediately into a hospital, where he had a serious operation for a gall-bladder condition. It is ridiculous to make of him an agent—a sick man out of a concentration camp. I *know* he wanted to go to Mexico and against his wishes he was held here. It was because of a wartime law that did not permit aliens to leave the country. I know that he lived modestly, interested mostly in what was happening in Germany, looking forward always to the time he could return. When, a few months ago, he thought he was about to return, he came to visit us here, to say goodby."

EISLER looked up at me, lit another cigarette. "I am not myself a politician," he said. "I am a composer, interested primarily in my music. Naturally, I am not uninterested in what is going on in the world and therefore I have opinions about it. I hope that is permissible, no?"

"Not to the Un-American Committee," I said. "They have announced in the papers that they are going to investigate you. You are expected to be frightened."

"I am not frightened," said Hanns Eisler with a smile. "I would like—no, say I would be delighted to testify. To give the committee my opinions. They are the opinions of an artist. I have never engaged, in this country, in political activity of any kind. That would be very foolish, don't you think, for an alien?"

"But you are an anti-Nazi," I said.

"Who is not?" he asked. (I didn't answer that one.)

"In Germany," he continued, "my music was devoted to the struggle of the people against oppression, against fascism. Music is very closely related to the aspirations of the people. Could it be otherwise?"

"I don't think so," I said. "But there are those who do."

"What do they know about music?" Eisler asked. (I didn't answer that one either.)

"Now," he said suddenly, "about my brother Gerhart. It would perhaps be best to ask the anti-Nazi underground in Europe for information. They would have more and better information about his activities."

"What about you?" I said. "Would you like to go back to Europe?"

"Very much," he said. "I have been invited to conduct my music in Berlin, in Paris. I have an invitation from the city of Vienna. In Berlin I am offered a professorship of music; in Paris I am invited to make a moving picture and I am asked to conduct concerts of my work in Brussels, Amsterdam and Munich. In Vienna they are again publishing my work, also in France; and it is being performed again in all of Europe."

He shrugged and smiled. "But do you think I would be allowed to go there now?"

I didn't know. After all, the man has such a subversive background. He had to flee Germany in 1933 after the Reichstag fire illuminated the true nature of Hitlerism. It seems that in addition to the music he had written which he said was "devoted to the struggle of the people against oppression," he had also published an anti-Hitler song only two weeks before Hitler came to power. It was called, "It's a Long Way to the Third Reich."

"The Nazis could not find me," he said, "but they burned all my books and music and they arrested all my neighbors. People living in the same apartment house and whom I had never met. One of them was a ballet dancer in the opera house. I did not know her, but the Nazis felt that she must know me. She went to a concentration camp for *not* knowing me. It made me very happy to learn that she was later released—and is now doing very well."

Hanns Eisler looked out through the broad windows of the house that sits on the beach by the Pacific. "This is a beautiful and wonderful country," he said. "With many beautiful and wonderful people. I would hate to think that what happened in my own country—and which brought about its destruction—could happen to yours. Do you think it will?"

portside patter

By BILL RICHARDS

Excerpts from the anti-Soviet book of the month:

The Russians act like Russians because they have inflexible minds. Men like Dulles and Vandenberg have declared their peaceful intentions but the Russians can't stretch their imaginations that far. Many American lawmakers and diplomats are versatile enough to act like fools and political blunderers but the Russians stubbornly refuse to compromise. If any good results from our meetings with these Oriental minds it's strictly Occidental.

One is immediately aware that the Soviet standard of living is low. Economists estimate that the average Russian has to work twelve hours to make one pair of shoes. Apologists claim that this is not surprising since the average Russian is not a shoemaker. One Soviet official told me that the people are willing to eat nothing but staples until conditions improve. Imagine having to shop for food in a hardware store!

State ownership has resulted in a housing shortage. True, the Germans destroyed a few buildings here and there but in Moscow five million people are jammed into an area no larger than New York. The socialist way of life is responsible for the tremendous crowds, especially in theaters, concert halls, opera houses and universities.

It is significant that favoritism exists in the Soviet Union. Whereas the workers are often forced to live two and three in a room Stalin has a whole room to himself. And many an official has confided to me that women and children are given preferential treatment.

Children are indocrinated at an early age. Very often a baby's first word is "Pravda-da." Moreover they are trained in sabotage practically from birth. A Soviet baby will think nothing of sabotaging his father's suit or the best rug in the house.

The Russians are also preparing for war. The cousin of a friend of a stenographer in one of our delegations told me in an exclusive interview that the Russians are splitting hairs in the UN until they finish splitting atoms at home. Suspicious of British and American oil interests in the Middle East, the Russians have a morbid fear of being stabbed in the Baku.

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The Rickshaw

"I thought you would like to go to a meeting tonight," the sergeant said. Mr. Eldridge learns about principles and freedom in Calcutta.

A Short Story by HOWARD FAST

IT WAS one hundred and twenty degrees in the shade, but I walked back to the Press Club because I had principles, and one of them was that I would not be drawn by a man who serves the function of a beast. I had lately come from the north, where sometimes it was one hundred and forty degrees in the shade, but it was dry there, and in an hour you could dehydrate yourself completely, yet never get a drop of moisture on your shirt. It was not dry here; it was wet, and I got wet, underwear, shirt, pants and all. So I plodded along most uncomfortably, only stopping once in a while beside the ghats, to watch the carefree natives swimming and diving. It looked cool and inviting, but I tempered my envy with the superior knowledge that these were the most carefully sponsored disease-breeders on earth. It was good to be a white man, wise and knowledgeable—an American among white men, which is even better—and to be able to shower and shave and put on clean clothes and order a Tom Collins and sit under an electric fan while I sipped it.

There, at a quarter to five, and feeling comfortably cool, I was starting on the second one when the sergeant came along and sat down next to me and asked me what I was doing that night.

"Right here," I said, "I intend to have one more drink before dinner, and then I will have my dinner, and then I will return here and have enough drinks to become pleasantly drunk, and then I will go to bed."

"It's a tough war, Mr. Eldridge," the sergeant said.

"For some it is," I agreed. I liked the sergeant, but he was bound to educate me. He was in Signal Service, and getting over something in the general hospital across the road. Now he was at the end of the cure and able to get out each evening, and he liked the food in the Press Club better than what they gave him at the hospital.

"I thought you would like to go to a meeting tonight," he said apologetically, "because there are some people here who would like to see you and talk to you, because you're an American writer, I mean. I mean, there are some trade union people and some writers, and they would like to talk to you."

"That's fine," I said. "That's fine."

"I mean you don't have to go if you don't want to go, but I told them I thought you would."

"You told them that?"

"Well, I've been eating on you, so I thought something like this—"

"Look, I walked four miles to get back here, and then I took a shower, and now I feel comfortable and cool for the first time today."

"Why didn't you take a rickshaw?"

I explained carefully and slowly that I did not like to be drawn by a man as by a beast. It was a principle, a very small principle. I explained to the sergeant that I still had to have a principle—just one small principle.

"India disturbs you," the sergeant agreed sympathetically. "Some people are sensitive about the Far East, and then it disturbs them."

"Thank you."

"I mean, I'm sorry it should disturb you this way, because there's so much that's interesting about it."

"I don't doubt it," I said. "When I was in Old Delhi, I used to walk past a factory sometimes, and I noticed that the boys who came off the day shift would gather under a lamp-post, and one of them would try to teach the others to read. So I wrote a letter to the commissioner, pointing out how commendable such eagerness for literacy was, and didn't he think he ought to do something about it?"

Yeh Chien-Yu.

"He never answered your letter," the sergeant said. "Well, neither would Mayor LaGuardia."

"He answered my letter. He said he was having a stronger bulb put in the lamp-post. I suppose you don't believe that?"

"I believe it," the sergeant nodded. "It's a funny land, but very interesting, if you're interested in human nature, I mean. If you don't come with me tonight, I got to go anyway, but you can get a jeep and I can't."

SO HE stayed to eat with me, and I went with him. The Brass who ate at the Press Club were made uncomfortable by enlisted men at the table—which was understandable—but they never said anything about it, and I knew that sooner or later the sergeant would get better, and they would send him back to putting up telephone wires. I had once asked the sergeant how it was that he seemed to know everyone in Calcutta—native people, not Americans or British—and in Bombay and Delhi, and in Rangoon, too, and even as far up North as Yenan; but he only answered that he always made acquaintances, and people were pretty much the same anyway, if you were interested in their problems. "I'm interested in the problems," he said.

After dinner, Johnny, who was a native driver, pulled out the jeep, and we got in with two wire service men and a Tenth Airforce Captain. At that time, the lights were not yet on in Calcutta, even though certain blackout restrictions were being relaxed, and there were still very few street signs; but Johnny knew the city the way you know the palm of your hand, and you just told him where to go and he took you there. We dropped off the other three and then turned into a working-

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Pencil sketches done in India by Yeh Chien-Yu.

class district of semi-detached houses, driving slowly until the sergeant said:

"Here it is."

I told Johnny to return at half past ten, and we walked up the steps of a small stucco building, the kind that are almost a basic unit out there, two entrances and divided into four small three room apartments. Before we went inside, I asked the sergeant:

"What are these people—Reds?"

"What do you mean, Reds?"

"I mean, are they Communists?"

"Some are and some aren't. Some of them publish the magazine of the Bengal Literary Society. They're good people, and they want to talk with you."

"It will be a pleasure to talk with them. We're out of bounds, aren't we?"

"Maybe a little."

Then he knocked on the door, and it opened and we went inside, and I wondered how it felt to have your throat cut in a dark corner of Calcutta. But after we were inside, I felt better about that, and saw that they were nice people, just as the sergeant had said. Everyone said hello, and then we sat down, and a girl brought us lemonade, and there was a big tray of cookies and sweet candies that looked like orange-colored pretzels. There was also an old electric fan on the ceiling, and that made it not quite so unpleasantly hot as it might have been.

Besides the sergeant and me, there were eight men in the room—the girl went out after she had passed around the drinks—and all but one of them were Indian. The one who wasn't Indian was a British corporal; his name was Hurley, and he had a Cockney accent, and he had behind him a year and a half in Burma. This surprised me a little, because one of the few things I had learned in India was the measure of hatred Indians had for the gentlemen who ruled them. Hurley was a big, rosy-cheeked man of about thirty, and when he talked, his voice boomed in the place. All of the others spoke softly—in that strangely accented English educated Indians use.

THREE of the Indians were trade unionists, and one of them—as I learned later—was the mass leader of the Bengal workers; it was at his house that we were: the other four were literary men, two of them journalists, two of them teachers at the college. But they all had in common that elemental leanness, the fined-down quality of a people who have not eaten their fill for many, many generations. They were all nice people; they were very gentle people, and they were always thinking of the next thing they would say and framing it so that it would not hurt your feelings. They were glad to have me there, they said; there were many things in India that American newspapermen should see.

I told them I had realized that.

"Mr. Eldridge is sensitive about the East," the sergeant explained, smiling at me apologetically. "Things here disturb him."

Our host, whose name was Charjee, nodded understandingly. "Most Americans are disturbed when they come here. It is natural, Mr. Eldridge."

"They get over it," Hurley boomed.

"It's only natural," the sergeant said. "Before the war, the only dead person I ever saw was my grandmother. They're very careful about those things at home. But my friend here had to stay at Lucknow where they have the plague, and there were seven hundred dying each day and nobody to bury them—I mean they laid them out on the road instead, and it's so hot up there—and then he comes down here for the end of the famine—well, you know what I mean."

"But they get over it," Hurley said, and nobody seemed to notice anything out of the way, and no one was embarrassed, except me. I tried to catch the sergeant's eye and express something of what I thought of him, but he was talking to one of the trade

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union people, and he wouldn't look my way.

They must have noticed that I wasn't too happy about the trend of the talk, because they shifted over to literary things, and they talked about the young writers in India and what they were trying to do, and how a new and vital literature was emerging from the struggle for freedom. They had two million men fighting fascism, and they said how can you keep a people as slaves who lend two million men to the fight for freedom?

"You're still too gentle," Hurley rushed in. "My word, such a gentle people, you've got to learn different."

A mosquito, hurtled down by the fan, fell on Charjee's knee. He lifted it off and placed it on the floor—he was a Communist too, I learned later—and said, a note of apology in his voice:

"Life is an important thing, and civilized people do not foolishly destroy what is important. Europeans become so annoyed at the cows in our streets—at famine time, I mean." There was a sincere note of regret in his voice.

Hurley said to me: "But make no mistake about it. The cows on the street aren't the whole truth. You haven't begun to understand how complicated it is."

I was looking around the room with its bare white plaster walls, its straight dark furniture with reed seats, its case of books, its plain grass rug on the floor.

The teacher of English at Calcutta College said: "We would like you to stay for longer than most people stay here, and then perhaps you can write the story about us as it should be written."

"Mr. Eldridge writes very good," the sergeant said. "He should write about you."

THE girl brought in more lemonade, and we talked about the literature of four lands, and they talked with their mouths full of literature—like honey—and properly for a land where five million out of four hundred million can read or write. The girl had long eyes; with her sari draped around her, you couldn't trace her figure, a habit with us, and you had to content yourself with her regal, erect walk. When she walked, Hurley watched her, but there was only a warm contemplation of beauty in his eyes, and it disturbed nobody.

I was not sorry anymore that I had come, but only that this strange yet homely evening under the auspices of the Bengal Literary Society was slipping away, and I looked at my watch more frequently.

"He asked the jeep to call for us at half past ten," the sergeant explained.

It was a good evening for them too, I think. Charjee shrugged it away. "Stay and you will have curry with us, and then you can find a rickshaw."

I shook my head slightly, and the sergeant, glancing sidewise at me, explained that his friend did not ride in rickshaws.

"No? Never?"

Hurley smiled bitterly. The trade union men looked at each other patiently.

"Could I ask why your friend doesn't ride in rickshaws?" Charjee said politely.

The sergeant explained that I had principles. I felt comfortable, because while they were a gentle people, nevertheless men drew them like beasts.

"Principles are fine things to have," Charjee said, "and I respect them." And the teacher of English added, "So many of the Americans have so many principles."

"You see," Hurley said tensely, turning to Charjee, "it isn't so simple with us either." He seemed terribly anxious to be understood.

"Here, in this room, three months ago, we faced a peculiar problem," Charjee said to me, "and I wonder how you would have solved it. It was at the height of the famine, as you may remember, the famine which the British made because they felt that a sick and starving folk would be less of a problem in Bengal. Each morning, they picked nine or ten hundred dead bodies off the streets of Calcutta. It was a very bad time, believe me. Well, at the time I speak of, four of us were having dinner here in this room, my daughter, myself, Shogar of the Central Trade Union Council, and Bose, who is district Party organizer here. It was not a happy dinner; we had a little rice and a little curry—one meal each day. Well, the window was open, and as we began to eat we heard the cries of the hungry, women and children—have you ever heard the cries of the hungry?"

"I heard them up the valley," I said. "There was famine there when I came in."

"Then you know what I mean. The window was open. That is the problem. What would you have done if you were eating dinner here that night?"

"It is not a fair question," Hurley said, in his incredibly Cockney accent. "You can't lay his principles alongside of yours."

"I think it's a fair question," I said. "I think I can answer it truthfully enough. I would have given the poor devils my dinner. That isn't heroic or charitable even; I was conditioned that way. Most Americans are."

Hurley smiled again, but there was a sadness in him, a lonely sadness that took the sting from his words. "But they become unconditioned so fast, so very fast. How many thousands of your Americans have I seen here in the East, and almost never did I hear one say Indian or Burmese, or Chinese, but for all people whose skin is one shade darker than theirs, they have one word, *waug*. They are complicated in their principles, just as my Indian friends are."

"WE DID not give them our dinner," Charjee said tiredly, as if the evening had suddenly become very long, too long. "We ate our dinner, and in the morning five dead

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bodies were on my doorstep, two women and three children."

Then there was silence. I didn't know what to say, and nobody else spoke until Charjee continued, "We are a few who will help lead India to freedom, and in this last famine in Bengal five million people died. Those five would have died anyway, a day later, two days later. They will die like that until India is free. There is always a price put on freedom, and part of the price we pay is to stay alive."

Another insect hurtled from the fan to his lap, and without thought he lifted it gently and dropped it to the ground. The sergeant put his hand on my knee and told me:

"You see, Charjee organized the rickshaw drivers. They are a very good union. They are a very militant union. During the past year, they struck three times, and each time they won their gains. They are a very militant union. You see, they haven't much to lose. I mean, the life of a rickshaw driver is only six or eight years after they begin to work, so they haven't much to lose. Some day they will help to do away with rickshaws, but until then—"

The jeep was sounding its horn, and we got up to go. Charjee was afraid he had wounded my feelings—a guest in his house. I must not think that Indians were boors. I must come again, and then we would talk more about literature and he would give me letters to other writers in the States.

"I'll come again," I said. "If you ask me, I'll come again."

"You're not angry?" the sergeant said, when we were in the jeep and on our way.

"Who is Hurley?" thinking that surely I had met him before and noticing how the gall in him had turned into an almost womanly sweetness as he listened to Charjee.

"He is away from home too long," the sergeant answered slowly. "I'm glad I'm not married. He has a wife and two kids and it's four and a half years since he saw them. He is a Communist and was a trade union leader back home, and they know it, and they keep sending him into Burma and hoping he will be killed."

"He looks healthy."

"I think he'll live," the sergeant said. "The East is very interesting, and if you get used to it, you can stay alive, if you want to enough. Too many people are sensitive about the East."

OIL ON THE DOCTRINE

How the State Department is greasing the way for the big grab of the Middle East gushers.

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

Washington.

A RECENT "Memorandum on National Legislation of Interest to Religious Groups" issued by the Friends Committee on National Legislation here declares that "Despite frank admission on the part of leading proponents that the major object is to protect our oil in the Middle East and restrain Russia rather than relieve hunger in Greece and Turkey. . . . Congress seems bent on passing S 938 and HR 2616."

Other opponents of the legislation to "lend" $400,000,000 to Greece and Turkey, two-thirds of which would go to military aid, also have pointed out the oil aspects of the Truman Doctrine. Sen. Claude Pepper (D., Fla.), a member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, in hearings on S 938, questioned the then Acting Secretary of State, Dean Acheson. Pepper asked:

"Do we have any what you call direct interest except our interest in the oil fields of Saudi Arabia? . . . So far as I recall, we have no direct financial or possessive interest in that area except the interest the American oil companies have in Saudi Arabia."

To this Sec. Acheson replied: "I think you could leave out the exception and the statement would be correct. . . . We have no direct possessive or other interest in these countries. . . ."

The real facts concerning the vast penetration of American imperialism into the oil-producing areas of the world—and of all of them the Near and Middle East is the greatest known potential—have, however, been on the whole neglected during the debate on the Truman Doctrine.

These facts are contained in what has become a collector's item, a volume entitled, *American Petroleum Interests in Foreign Countries*, from the extensive hearings held in the 79th Congress by the O'Mahoney Special Investigating Committee on Petroleum Resources. Both the Government Printing Office and the committee have exhausted their thousands of copies, only a file copy remaining available.

The printed charts and data and testimony add up to one simple story, although it does not appear in the committee's conclusions. That story is that American imperialism is not just about to reach out its tentacles into what formerly was Britain's domain; it has already become the dominant factor. For years it has been taking over British interests and biting into Britain's oil holdings. The British imperialist position has long been undermined, and American imperialism through its aggressiveness has climbed to the top of the hill. It is a little late to worry about becoming involved in the Middle and Near East. That this has come about so quietly, without the American public's being fully aware of our involvement, without the concern over empire such as is traditional in Great Britain, is a peculiarity of American imperialism.

Now, suddenly, the apprehension of the public over American imperialistic designs is making even some of the big oil companies jittery. It is known, for instance, that an official of the Arabian-American Oil Co., hearing a report that the Navy was about to send a task force into the Persian Gulf to call at the oil port of Iran's Abadan, was worried for fear that if it should happen it would be said his company asked for it. Meanwhile lobbyists for the Gulf Oil Corp., controlled by Mellon interests, and a

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part owner of the Kuwait Oil Co. with a concession on the Persian Gulf, reportedly were asserting that nothing short of such a task force would do the trick.

These little minor differences, of course, are only tactical ones. Neither is it important which comes first, a government decision or an oil company's aim, any more than the argument of which precedes the other, the chicken or the egg. When the son of Ibn Saud, the king of Saudi Arabia, visited this country last winter as the official guest of the President, he was taken on a tour of the country in a plane paid for by the Arabian-American Oil Co., but three State Department officials went along, not just for the ride but to run the show.

The important thing is that the economic basis of the whole Greek-Turkish deal has been clouded over by the administration's attempt to sell it to the American people under the cloak of a gigantic Red scare. Sen. Glen Taylor, progressive Democrat from Idaho, said in floor debate: "I should like to point out . . . that we are not voting as free agents here. The Associated Press, on March 16, said: 'Anyone who stood out against Mr. Truman's request would be in danger of appearing to favor communism.' "

Some of the Republican proponents of the measure have been more frank than Dean Acheson in speaking for it. In a debate on the air Rep. Chester E. Merrow (R., N. H.), member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said: "Failure to adopt the President's program for extending aid to Greece and Turkey would mean that Soviet Russia with her foreign policy of expansion and aggression would soon control the Mediterranean Sea and the Middle East. It is perfectly obvious that this will imperil American and other Western oil interests in the Middle East. To make sure that this vast source of power remains in thoroughly friendly hands we must be firm and resolute. . . . It is not only oil but vital sea and air routes which are involved." (NBC, April 5.)

Substitute for "thoroughly friendly hands" the phrase "governments over which the US can assert complete political control," and you have the program of American imperialism. Issuing from the lips of Mr. Truman, however, it rolls forth in phrases of unctuous concern for the "freedom" of peoples, reminiscent of the concern which filled the air and press just a little more than a year ago for the integrity of Iran. Much of the criticism of the political regimes and interior problems of Yugoslavia and Rumania has its oily side, too. Not for nothing did the Standard Oil Co. (New Jersey), directly and through

subsidiaries and affiliates, invest money in Poland and Rumania, just as it did in Palestine.

"THE war has brought home to us," the O'Mahoney committee concluded in the volume on foreign oil holdings of American companies, issued in 1945, before the war was ended, "the importance of having far-flung bases of supply abroad. To insure that these facilities be available to our military forces in time of emergency we must have peacetime markets." It is not for peacetime consumption, it is obvious, that the government encourages the companies to develop production in foreign lands, but to hang onto our reserves here for use in war.

Of the four great oil producing areas outside the United States, the Caribbean, the Caspian basin in the Soviet Union, the Persian Gulf and the Netherlands East Indies, "American companies lead in the first, with British-Netherlands interests in second place," says the O'Mahoney committee volume. In the third area, "British interests dominate although American companies hold extensive properties with large proved reserves," and one witness said they were equally divided. In the fourth, British-Netherlands interests lead, with American companies becoming "increasingly important." Pointing out that these areas will be "actively and increasingly exploited," it urges "a national oil policy encouraging to American enterprise abroad" in order to decrease "political risks."

The total foreign oil reserves in 1945 were listed at 43,319,800,000 barrels, of which American companies owned 17,371,700,000, or 40.1 percent. Total foreign reserves excluding Russian were 37,554,800,000 barrels, of which 46.3 percent were American.

Eleven oil companies answering a questionnaire (ninety-three percent of the industry so far as control goes) gave incomplete figures for 1944 showing that by the end of the year the accumulative investment abroad by the American companies would be $3,200,000,000. Their total assets abroad were listed at $2,300,000,000, twenty-nine percent of their total net worth, $4,400,000,000.

To quote the printed report, "The magnitude of the reserves of the Near and Middle East dwarfs the reserves in all other areas of that hemisphere." American companies' investment zoomed up from a mere $277,000 in 1918, to $147,507,000 in 1943, and $202,918,000 in 1944. No doubt they are still zooming.

As an example of the perspective, and as indication of how willing these oil giants are to invest and wait over a long period for return, to keep the native populations or rival powers from nicking the "take," the Iraq Petroleum Co., Ltd., spent an estimated $62,000,000 in developing one field, the Kirkuk field, one of the world's largest, between 1925 and the date it began producing commercially, 1934, of which sum the American share was approximately $14,720,000. This company, which has large holdings in Palestine, formerly was the Turkish Petroleum Co. Its history embraces the era of bitter Anglo-American struggle over oil. The State Department in negotiations lasting from 1920 to 1928, finally obtained a concession in Iraq. Americans were allowed to have a 23¾ percent interest through the Near East Development Corp. in the Iraq Petroleum Co.

Americans conducted their penetration in the Near East by a variety of

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devices. Where their machinations to obtain big sugar, coffee, tin and nitrate holdings over the world are well known, having taken place in a trust-busting period, their struggles for a grip on world-wide oil reserves were conducted in seemly quietness, and often with the connivance of certain sections of British capital.

THE story of the Bahrein development is a case in point. Under the so-called Red Line Agreement, participants of the Iraq Petroleum Co., an international company (British, US, French, Dutch capital), were bound not to seek singly concessions in what was roughly the Ottoman empire, or the Arab part of the former Turkish Empire. But Eastern Gulf Corp., an American company, then a participant in the Iraq Co., obtained two option contracts from a British syndicate covering the concession at Bahrein Island, and one in the Kuwait area. So it transferred the Bahrein concession to Standard Oil Co. of California. Standard then formed a wholly-owned subsidiary, the Bahrein Petroleum Co., Ltd., to take the concessions, but to conform to the niceties of British-Bahrein agreements, this subsidiary was registered as a British corporation under Canadian laws. When the British syndicate to continue the myth of British ownership paid the Americans' rental, the British Colonial Office caught on. Angrily it threatened to annul the whole deal. Only the intervention of the State Department saved the day. After three years of negotiation, the first representative of Standard Oil of California arrived in Bahrein. A State Department document filed with the committee in 1945, when the State Department was not disclaiming aid to American oil companies, states proudly, "Here again the prompt and positive action by the State Department had secured results favorable to an American-owned company."

The Bahrein Petroleum Co., Ltd., now is owned fifty-fifty by Standard Oil of California and the Texas Co. The Kuwait concession, after more long pressure by our State Department, was awarded the Kuwait Oil Co., half British and half American, the Gulf Oil Corp. retaining its place and holding all the American interest.

Standard Oil of California and the Texas Corp. own, fifty-fifty, the Arabian-American Oil Co., which was given the exclusive concession in Saudi Arabia in 1939 by Ibn Saud.

The State Department, which appointed thirteen or fourteen petroleum advisers at important points over the world to "assist the ambassadors in handling oil problems," also aided American companies or those with a part American interest to obtain concessions in Iran, Afghanistan, India, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Qatar.

And although in this country we produced 4,600,000 barrels of oil a day in 1944, the feverish stepping up of production abroad continues. The Saudi Arabia concession, which witnesses said "has probably the largest potentiality of increased resesrves" in the Middle East, which in turn "has the greatest potentiality of any known area in the world," is turning out 225,000 barrels a day, according to Labor Research Association. Moreover, it is planning a 1,200-mile pipe line across the Arabian desert to the Mediterranean coast, for which Wall Street-controlled insurance companies are lending $125,000,000. Standard Oil of California has ties with the Continental Illinois Bank of Chicago, and the Chase National Bank (Rockefeller controlled) is getting in on the pie with a loan of $100,000,000.

Standard Oil of New Jersey and Socony-Vacuum are trying to buy stock in the Arabian-American Oil Co. This is being contested, however, in British courts by the French, who despite having been squeezed out in many places retain an interest in the Iraq Petroleum Co. and contend that the Red-Line agreement is involved here.

And wherever pipe lines extend, as the Iraq Petroleum Co. line from Kirkuk field does for 469 miles in one direction, to Haifa, on the Mediterranean, and 382 miles to Tripoli, in the other, this means a concentration of power houses, facilities, resident armed forces. And this means governments which must be bought lock, stock and barrel with all their picturesque accompaniments of sheiks, traveling goatherds and flowing robes.

In the case of the pipeline from Kirkuk, the company was exempted from all taxation, through the British government, which also eased the difficulties of obtaining property—clearly a revival of the rights of extra-territoriality. But the price of petroleum in Haifa did not reflect this generosity. It was the same as the price of petroleum in Manchester plus transportation back to Palestine.

If Saudi Arabia is important in oil, and witness after witness pointed out how World War II was won by oil, it is still only a sort of backyard to Palestine, the great area of exit on the Mediterranean. Palestine—where out of a budget of £20,000,000 spent by Britain, over £6,000,000 are spent for police and prisons alone, and only £1,684,000 for health and education. But many Jews who look to the US to take over Palestine and create a dream-world of justice and liberty forget that US imperialism today has its tentacles firmly implanted in Palestine. They forget that it is in the Near and Middle East with its proved reserve of 26,800,000,000 barrels of oil (1945), that about sixty-four percent of the entire American foreign-owned reserve is located. To see how huge this is, only 41,000,000,000 were produced throughout the whole world in the last thirty years, and 2,500,000,000 in 1944.

The American people are going to have to make a decision. As Sen. Edward Martin (R., Pa.), who made it clear he was not opposing the Truman Doctrine, said, "I say that our people should be informed . . . that if we give or lend this $400,000,000 to Greece and Turkey—which will apparently commit us to greater sums as required—they cannot expect additional educational benefits from the federal government. . . ." The Republican and Democratic reactionaries will use this as an excuse to cut down on all social legislation here. This will be one major result of sending guns and military missions to Greece, Turkey and elsewhere to bolster up puppets who make it safe for our imperialist ventures.

Dem Reds! Dey draw us just like we wuzn't human.

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PALESTINE: ANGLO-AMERICAN BETRAYAL

By CHARLES ABRAMS

VERY little progress can be reported from the first few days of the General Assembly's debate on Palestine. As I write procedural and parliamentary skirmishes have succeeded in exposing an Anglo-American conspiracy to bar the Assembly from discussing the real causes of, and the true responsibility for, Palestine's state of affairs.

The opening phase of this special session was dominated by Operation Agenda. The United States and Great Britain, the leading actors in the unfolding battle to tighten imperialist control over the rich oil and strategic resources of the Mediterranean and the Middle East, entered the Assembly with the stubborn intention of limiting the agenda in such a way as to divert attention from the sordid realities of their power politics. This was entirely consistent with what happened shortly before the session opened when the US bypassed the United Nations completely with its enunciation of the Truman Doctrine and the Greco-Turkish subsidy. Here at Flushing Meadows we have been witnessing a further extension of the Truman Doctrine's logic in the stand adopted by the American delegate after consultation with Secretary Marshall.

The Anglo-American strategy was to restrict discussion of the explosive and painful realities that impelled the convening of this session. This strategy leads to the sidetracking of a just solution of the Palestine crisis and tends to undermine the prestige and the authority of the UN as a whole. Take, for example, Sir Alexander Cadogan's cynical reply, never challenged by the Americans, to India's Asaf Ali, who wanted to know whether Britain would abide by the Assembly's decisions. Said Cadogan: "It is quite easy for other representatives to carry out any decision of the Assembly. If it were a decision which we could not reconcile with our conscience, should we single-handed be expected to expend blood and treasure in carrying it out? I am only going to make a reservation on that particular point, and I shall make it in proper terms in the Assembly."

Thus before Operation Agenda got under way Britain reserved the right not to implement Assembly decisions if these decisions deviated at all from the single item of discussion proposed by her. In this Britain was staunchly supported by the US. Thus Britain won her point that the purpose of this Assembly meeting was to constitute and instruct "a special committee to prepare for the consideration of the question of Palestine at the second regular session" next September. Not to consider the question of Palestine, mind you, but "to prepare for the consideration of the question of Palestine." And after three days of Anglo-American wire-pulling and word-twisting, lavishly aided by Assembly President Oswaldo Aranha of Brazil, this was the agenda finally adopted.

This piece of Anglo-American business was strongly opposed—notably by Poland, Czechoslovakia, India and the Soviet Union. At the final Assembly vote this mutilated agenda received the assent of less than half of the Assembly's members. And thanks to Anglo-American jockeying this is what we have: an Assembly session to cope with the crisis in Palestine, the product of close to three decades of British imperialist rule, on terms dictated by the British and Americans. That is why I say that the authority of the UN is being undermined.

If this is not the picture that emerged from your daily newspaper it is not the fault of the UN. The press facilities at Flushing Meadows are the answer to a newspaperman's dream. Full texts of speeches are available soon after a speaker finishes. But the great majority of the American newspapers have been too busy with their favorite sport of finding anti-Soviet angles and headlines to find the time to report the true facts about the Assembly sessions.

THE discussion in committee did not revolve around adopting or rejecting the specific demands of the Arab states. It was concentrated on the question of whether or not the agenda should be broadened to include a discussion of the substance of the Palestine question. The position of the American government was "to limit the activities of the special Assembly to the setting up of machinery for giving the problem . . . study."

The position of the Soviet Union was equally clear despite its distortion in the newspapers. Said Gromyko: "There are many people who might well wonder why the General Assembly, convened in special session, does not desire to discuss the substance of the Palestine problem. . . . This is the chief consideration which leads the Soviet delegation to the conclusion that it would be unwise to oppose a proposal for the discussion of the substance of this matter in the present session of the Assembly. I leave aside the question of a decision to be taken by the Assembly on the substance of this matter. . . . I should like to emphasize that in expressing my agreement with the proposal submitted by Egypt, I am ready to agree with this proposal only in the sense that it suggests a study of the substance of the question by the General Assembly, and not necessarily in the sense that the Assembly should take a decision in accordance with the proposal submitted by the delegation of Egypt and supported by the delegation of other Arab states."

There is nothing in this remark of Gromyko's which in any way proves or even indicates an alliance between the Soviet Union and Arab feudalism. When the newspapers implied or said that there was they were intentionally fabricating a falsehood in order to inflame opinion against the USSR. But of all the comment on the sessions that I have read what struck me as especially unfounded was Max Lerner's editorial in *PM* of April 30. Instead of focusing his attention on the facts he wrote a piece of fantasy on a non-existent Soviet-Arab understanding which can only comfort the Hearstlings. He should have known that as the debate developed it became quite clear that only those who supported a full discussion of the Palestine question at this session supported consideration of Jewish representation in the discussion. The Poles were insistent in their demand that the Jews be heard in the Assembly. Their resolution had the complete support of the Soviet delegate as well as of the Czechoslovak. *And the record shows that it was the American spokesman who blocked the Polish resolution and fought against Jewish representation in the Assembly.* These are the stubborn facts despite Lerner's lamentations.

Before creating any new myths about Palestine, and attacking the attitude of American Communists in the matter, Lerner would do well to study the facts and the history

(*Continued on page* 31)

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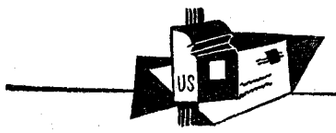

MORE ON DEWEY'S PHILOSOPHY

Corliss Lamont:

TO NEW MASSES: I thought that the recent philosophical discussion between me and Dr. Howard Selsam (NM, Feb. 25, 1947) was eminently worthwhile, and that the whole tone of the debate was in the true philosophic spirit. I am glad that it provoked such interesting comments. However, while Selsam's carefully argued article compelled me to review and reconsider my position, I still radically disagree with him as regards the philosophy of Professor John Dewey.

Selsam summons up a formidable array of references to support his claim that Dewey's philosophy is essentially idealistic in the sense of giving spirit or thought primacy over nature. But from the volume which he chiefly quotes, a massive symposium entitled *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, he does not cite Dewey's answers to such critics as George Santayana and Bertrand Russell. I find Dewey's specific replies in this book (pp. 515-608) extremely convincing in their insistence on objective reality as existing outside of and independent of the human or any other form of mind. The view attributed to him that only human experience is real Dewey calls "monstrous"; such pure subjectivism, he holds, is obviously contradicted by his "idea of experience as an interaction of organism and environment" (p. 531). It is true of course that in describing objective reality Dewey, like a number of non-idealistic philosophers, prefers to speak of it in terms of "events" rather than "matter."

As for Dr. Selsam's citations from Dewey himself regarding the latter's theory of knowledge, I think that in all cases except one he has unwittingly misinterpreted them (and in this tendency he is in distinguished company) either by isolating them from the total context or by transforming an ambiguity of language into a fundamental principle of philosophy. The exception is where Selsam refers to Dewey's first published philosophical paper, which appeared in 1882, when he was twenty-three. The fact is that Dewey at that time was still an idealist, since, like Karl Marx, he started out in the idealistic tradition and later turned against it.

It might be more constructive at this point, however, if Selsam and I simply agreed to disagree about John Dewey and if there were some discussion of the other important issue that I raised: the relation of American naturalism in general to dialectical materialism. Selsam surely does not hold that American naturalists such as F. J. E. Woodbridge, Morris Cohen, Roy Wood Sellars and Abraham Edel, who represents the younger generation, are idealists. Here is a theme that, if adequately analyzed, would throw a great deal of light on the development of contemporary philosophy in the United States, the Soviet Union and the world at large; and that would reveal, in my opinion, many striking similarities between the naturalist and materialist schools of thought.

CORLISS LAMONT.

New York.

Howard Selsam:

TO NEW MASSES: I appreciate the nice things Dr. Lamont says about our recent philosophical discussion, though I regret deeply that he still disagrees with my interpretation of Dewey's philosophy. I differ, I fear, from Lamont in not being content to "agree to disagree." Marxist philosophical stubbornness still makes me believe that both our interpretations cannot be true and that therefore the argument must be carried on until agreement on Dewey's position is reached. I heartily agree with Lamont on the desirability of a full-length discussion of "American naturalism in general," and shall be happy to participate with him in any such discussion. Certainly it can be stated that none of the thinkers he names are outright idealists (to the extent I think Dewey is), although I am afraid that neither Woodbridge nor Cohen are completely free of idealist elements. Neither of them ever called himself a materialist, while Sellars and Edel do. But all this is for a later discussion.

Corliss Lamont says that I "unwittingly misinterpreted" passages from Dewey "either by isolating them from the total context or by transforming an ambiguity of language into a fundamental principle of philosophy." I especially appreciate his personal generosity since, having been aware for many years of the dangers of misinterpreting Dewey through the wrenching of statements from their context in a complex and tightly woven philosophical system, I studiously attempted not to do so in my article. What I can't overcome, however, is the conviction that throughout all of Dewey's writings he himself is ambiguous in his conceptions of both "experience" and "nature." It is this ambiguity, in my opinion, that allows Dewey continually to play back and forth between objectivism and subjectivism in epistemology, and between spiritualism and materialism in ontology.

The most serious criticism Lamont raises concerning my piece is that I failed to cite Dewey's very lengthy and full reply to his critics in *The Philosophy of John Dewey*. This was an unfortunate omission, inasmuch as I did cite a number of the critics in the same volume. I would still maintain, however, that the error was procedural rather than substantive. As a matter of fact, I have often used Dewey's reply as the main basis for the same kind of analysis of his thought as appeared in NEW MASSES. It is true, further, that Dewey gets in some good digs at the follies of such misshapen systems as those of Russell and Santayana. Nevertheless, I would urge all serious students of Dewey to study carefully the document in question as an illustration both of his anti-materialist position and of his ability to evade and confuse.

Let me note briefly a few of his arguments: His distinction between knowledge and intelligence is a way of avoiding the connotation of objective reference attached to the former term (p. 520f). He substitutes a psychological theory of experience taken from James for the real problem under discussion—does experience reveal to us an objective world? (pp. 533-535). He insists here, as always, that the objects of physical science are not existential and approvingly refers to Duhem's doctrine "that scientific objects are symbolic devices for connecting together the things of ordinary experience" (pp. 536-8). He explicitly declares it absurd to say anything about the nature of things prior to inquiry into them (which, of course, in one sense is obviously true), and then converts the question as to whether a planet or the sun exists prior to our knowing them into the question whether we can know the sun without first knowing it as a gob of light in non-cognitive experience (pp. 546-8). These particular pages strike me as nothing short of deliberate, conscious and dishonest legerdemain.

After quoting himself to the effect that certain controversies "spring from the assumption that the true and valid object of knowledge is that which has being prior to and independent of the operations of knowing," he condemns Murphy for taking that sentence and isolating it from its context (p. 566f). I would like to know how that sentence can mean anything but what it says in *any* context. He categorically rejects "realistic epistemologies" (along with idealistic ones, in true Machian fashion) (p. 560). Concerning religion, Dewey seems very much hurt that Dr. Schaub had found him unsympathetic. It was all a dreadful mistake. He wants to see "a more humane,

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more liberal, and broader religious attitude" (pp. 594-7).

Finally, I wish all could read his two pages explaining why he does not call himself a materialist (p. 604f). Here Dewey repeats some of the same arguments he used to dismiss materialism in 1882, when Lamont agrees he was an idealist. His reasoning runs: experience is a product of existential conditions, but any conditions we can know or talk about are products of our experience, *ergo* "'materialism' commits suicide." In my humble opinion, it is Dewey and not philosophical materialism that has committed suicide. For further analysis of Dewey's thought I can refer the reader to my review of his latest book, *Problems of Men*, in the current Spring issue of *Science and Society*.

In conclusion, may I again thank Dr. Lamont and NEW MASSES for the opportunity for this discussion, and urge all interested readers to study Lenin's amazingly rich and profound philosophical masterpiece, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. In that work Lenin answers with utmost clarity and explicitness every point Dewey and our positivist contemporaries raise. We can't ask Dewey, at this late date, to read Lenin, but anyone who wants to find his way around in the maze of contemporary philosophy has the responsibility of reading him.

HOWARD SELSAM.

New York.

In Accord with Dr. Lamont

TO NEW MASSES: In the discussion between Dr. Lamont and Dr. Selsam I am entirely in accord with Dr. Lamont and can only regret that a student of philosophy of such fine values as Dr. Selsam should rigidify his mind by a static interpretation which only does injustice to the dynamic spirit of Marxism itself. As a matter of fact, there are many definite indications in the writings of Marx-Engels to show that they themselves anticipate a pragmatic conception of thinking similar to that which Dewey develops more profoundly and extensively. That there are also in the writings of the founders evidences of a sterile materialism, of the kind which Dr. Selsam identifies with Marxism too exclusively, does not mitigate against this assertion. I can think of no greater disservice to the vitality of the general position with which Dr. Selsam is identified than the kind of narrow orthodoxy from which, if his article is an example, he approaches such basic issues as Dr. Lamont raises.

THEODORE BRAMELD.
University of Minnesota.

Minneapolis.

Agrees with Dr. Selsam

TO NEW MASSES: I found the discussion by Howard Selsam and Corliss Lamont interesting and significant. But may I say that Lamont bit off too big a piece when he attempted to reconcile John Dewey's philosophy with dialectical materialism? I agree with Selsam that lofty motives are at the root of Lamont's effort, but in attempting to separate Dewey's philosophy from his anti-Sovietism, Lamont got himself on the proverbial limb.

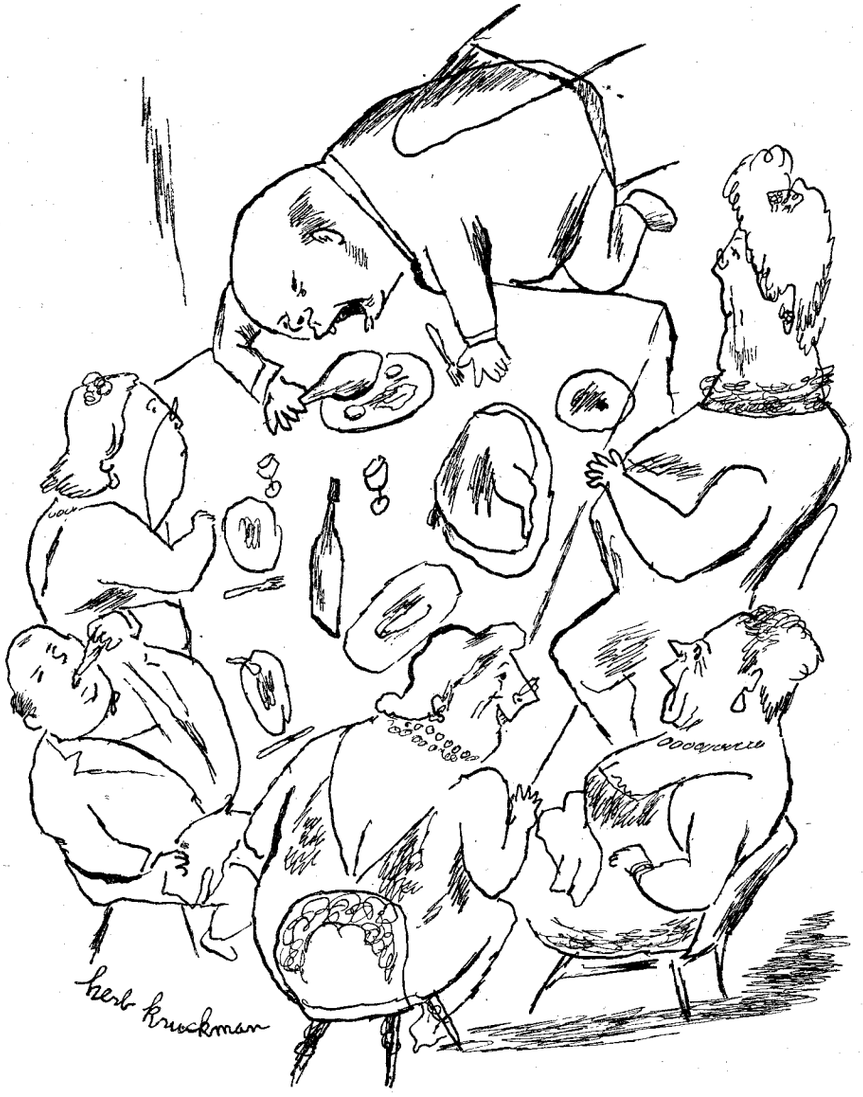
The fact of transcending importance is this: Dewey and his kind could afford to praise the Soviet Union before the full impact of Soviet civilization had made its imprint upon the culture of Western Europe and the US. But the test of genuine liberalism is being applied now, for it is in the present decade that Soviet socialism has stood forth as a peaceful, democratic challenge to the western capitalisms. It was precisely when this challenge became apparent to the world that the Deweys, Counts, Childs, Hooks, *et al.*, scampered hurriedly off the liberal bandwagon.

The aforesaid exponents of social democracy began to talk, as they are still talking, about "Soviet totalitarianism." In the philosophical sense, this point has relevance in that it shows that their pragmatism (or instrumentalism) had been originally designed by Dewey to help make American capitalism work more effectively. The Deweyites, like certain other Social Democrats, have mouthed socialistic phrases, but it would be absurd to assume that they have ever been seriously concerned with ushering socialism upon the American scene. In the final analysis, the Deweyites have proved that they have been incapable of getting beyond what amounts to nineteenth century liberalism. This fact, as portrayed against a backdrop of Soviet socialism, demonstrates why the Deweyites are ideologically dangerous.

Since it is socialism alone which can bring security to the world, and since the most realistic program of social development has been advanced by the Marxists, the Deweyites in their violent opposition to Communists everywhere have confirmed their role as anti-progressive Social Democrats.

A. T.

New York.



"And then I said to her, 'But who ever goes to NewBURYport?'"

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PARIS LETTER

by Claude Morgan

FRENCH writers have lost one of their finest spirits, Jean-Richard Bloch. Our friend J-R.B., as we often called him, was a man who never separated thought from action. He was a writer in the tradition of Barbusse and Romain Rolland, devoting all his energy to the cause of man.

His works are many and varied: novels, plays, philosophical essays and one of the most beautiful love-poems in our literature, *La Nuit Kurde* (*A Night in Kurdistan*). In a postscript to the book, J-R.B. wrote in 1925: "Everywhere man suffers and is uneasy. The life around him is sordid, muddied, bristling with threats. Let us have no illusions that by lulling him with a few fairy tales we will make him forget his hurts. The forces unleashed refuse to wait any longer." And he added: "The last bonds of delight that tied me to the past have been unloosed. Now I am ready for the grim task that is ours. Our youth is dead. There remains the youth of the world, which is only beginning." So Jean-Richard Bloch threw himself into the anti-fascist struggle.

Every French intellectual still remembers the brilliant articles he wrote each month, before World War II, in the magazine *Europe*. When the war broke out he was hounded as a Jew and an Alsatian. He managed to escape to the Soviet Union, and there he spoke on the Moscow Radio to the intellectuals of France. He told us of the superhuman energy, the spirit of sacrifice of the Russian people. He exhorted us to resist, repeating daily that there was no other way but to fight ceaselessly and with every means. How his rousing speeches spurred us on!

On his return to France he knew tragedy at its worst. His daughter, his son-in-law and his old mother had been murdered by the enemy. But instead of crushing him, this sorrow caused him to redouble his energies. He remained at his post until his last hours, fighting the anti-fascist war. He fought as a writer and as editor of the newspaper *Ce Soir* (where Louis Aragon is now carrying on in his place).

IN FRENCH intellectual circles the anti-fascist struggle is especially sharp. The acquittal of Rene Hardy, who had handed over Jean Moulin, President of the National Council of the Resistance Movement, to the Gestapo, gave the signal for a violent campaign of slander against the anti-fascist writer Pierre Herve. But Herve is a stubborn Breton: despite the scandalous outcome of this trial in which the principal witnesses called were cunningly maneuvered, Herve insisted on calling a spade a spade and Hardy a traitor. Many newspapers accused him of reopening a case that had been tried and of slandering an innocent man. But then public opinion realized that Herve was the one who was right. This militant writer was unknown before World War II. In 1940 he collaborated with Georges Politzer and the physicist Jacques Salomon (son-in-law of the late Paul Langevin) in launching the underground paper *L'Universite Libre* (*Free University*). Captured by the Gestapo, Herve made a bold escape with twenty of his comrades through an air-hole in the *Palais de Justice*. And today he has become one of the outstanding figures in our political and intellectual life.

There was a lively incident in this open anti-fascist war, a riot at the Sorbonne during a lecture by Tristan Tzara. The surrealist Andre Breton—he spoke on the New York radio during the war, short-waving to France his comments on the messages of Petain—accused Tzara of no longer being the dadaist of yore and of allowing politics to play too big a part in his life.* Then the big hall turned into a boxing-ring with individual fights breaking out in many aisles. Finally Breton and his friends had to leave the place.

THIS literary interlude was of course lost on the general public. Right now, most people are concerned with the speaking campaign begun by General de Gaulle. Sometimes volcanoes one thought extinct come to life again. General de Gaulle has declared war on the leading French political parties (especially on one party he does not name). He is trying to turn the man in the street against the Republican Constitution which the country freely voted to accept. Like Andre Malraux—who has become one of his most loyal lieutenants—he dreams of creating a type of man above political parties and programs. He has started a movement called "Reunion of the French People"; it is headed by Jacques Soustelle, who was formerly in charge of de Gaulle's political police.

I have just read the remarkable book, *As He Saw It*, by Elliott Roosevelt. It has just appeared in France and will have, I hope, tremendous success. Elliott Roosevelt notes his father's opinion of de Gaulle:

"De Gaulle," Roosevelt declared at Casablanca, "is out to achieve one-man government in France. I can't imagine a man I would distrust more. His whole Free French movement is honeycombed with police spies—he has agents spying on his own people. To him, freedom of speech means freedom from criticism—of him."

What insight your great Franklin D. Roosevelt had! Today a very important section of the French people thinks and speaks as he did. Certainly de Gaulle has the right, as any citizen has, to express his ideas. Neither the press nor the book-publishing field will refuse to let him be heard. But there is a difference between free expression of political ideas and this campaign of agitation and division, at a time when France has to lift herself by her bootstraps. An important section of French public opinion has shown concern at de Gaulle's campaign. A big meeting held at the *Velodrome d'Hiver* in Paris gave expression to this concern. This reaction of democratic defense could easily have been foreseen. And to the extent that the campaign against our democratic institutions broadens, our counter-campaign will spread.

Nevertheless, the importance of de Gaulle's campaign must not be exaggerated. True, some of his ardent followers have today made common cause with the former supporters of Petain. But the mass of the French people remains and will remain faithful to freedom.

Intellectual life is bound to feel the effects of this fight. But nothing is healthier or more vivifying than struggle. The honor of every intellectual worthy of the name consists in shaping his acts in accordance with his ideas, in fully committing himself in the direction of his thoughts. That was what Jean-Richard Bloch taught us to do. And we will have more than one occasion to follow his example.

Translated by John Rossi

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* Breton has been identified with Trotskyism.—*Ed.*

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review and comment

A POET ON THE THRESHOLD

Wallace Stevens must always fight against the disintegration of his art in barren thought.

By S. FINKELSTEIN

TRANSPORT TO SUMMER, *by Wallace Stevens. Knopf.* $2.50.

WALLACE STEVENS is in many ways the most remarkable living US poet. The substance of this book is in its eight long poems, in all of which Stevens is the philosopher, arguing ideas. Being an artist, Stevens unites his philosophy with his art, and the involvement is so complete that the positive values of his philosophy become the source of his poetic power. The negative values become his limitations.

Stevens accepts the world of reality but does not understand it. He neither has nor seeks any mythical world, nor any reality within himself apart from nature. The only world we know and can know, he repeatedly says, is the world outside our senses. Ideas and consciousness are a unique quality of man's mind, differing from nature, yet they are a creation of the natural world and depend upon it.

To say more than human things
with human voice,
That cannot be . . .
To speak humanly from the
height or from the depth
Of human things, that is acutest
speech.

This is only, however, the beginning of realism. Stevens never goes farther, to plot the law and arrangement of the outward reality he accepts. And so seeing it as chaotic, he must always combat a lingering drive toward mysticism. The wish for such a world is always present.

It is more difficult to evade
That habit of wishing and to ac-
cept the structure
Of things as the structure of
ideas.

The fact that Stevens has gone a long way toward realism gives extraordinary character to his poetry. Few living writers can catch as well as he the immediate experience, the keen perception of the world in its variety of color.

Fly low, cock bright, and stop on
a bean pole. Let
Your brown breast redden, while
you wait for warmth.
With one eye watch the willow,
motionless.

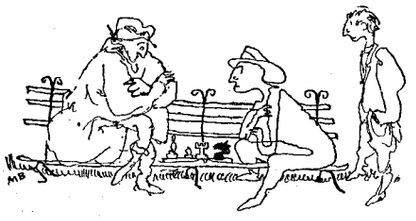
He can catch wonderfully well the moods with which a human being reacts to the things of the world.

Time is a horse that runs in the
heart, a horse
Without a rider on a road at
night.
The mind sits listening and hears
it pass.

It is someone walking rapidly in
the street.
The reader by the window has
finished his book
And tells the hour by the lateness
of the sounds.

A great many of the shorter poems are obscure, in the sense that they are meant as studies in the craft of poetry. He will dissect and study word-sound, contrasting slow moving lines like

A geranium withers on the win-
dow sill



to faster phrases like

The sound of that slick sonata.

He will study the symbolic use of imagery,

You were happy in spring
With the half color of quarter
things.
The slightly brighter sky, the
melting clouds,
The single bird, the obscure
moon.

He will play with clashing images suggesting a surrealist montage,

The green roses drifted up from
the table
In smoke.

He will paint like an impressionist,

It was like passing a boundary to
dive
Into the sun-filled water, brightly
leafed.

Such experiments may also be explained as having a measure of reality. They are studies in the use of language, experiments in what might be called the science of art, sharpenings of the artist's tools. Stevens never regards such practices as ends in themselves. He never falls for the belief that "the word is the making of the world," although this thought, like all the other aspects of mysticism he rejects, fascinates him. He realizes that men make language, and their making gives language its expressive content. Language has no life of its own apart from life and people.

Men make themselves their speech.
The hard hidalgo
Lives in the mountainous charac-
ter of his speech.

And thus, he can unite his subtlety of word image and sound in a poetic texture, clear and deeply moving.

Now in midsummer come and all
fools slaughtered
And spring's infuriations over and
a long way
To the first autumnal inhalations,
young broods
Are in the grass, the roses are
heavy with a weight
Of fragrance and the mind lays
by its trouble.

But such splendid passages are not enough to explain and contain all his obscurities. Did he honestly, like a Whitman, try to explore the world,

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we could find in his art a balance between experiment and understanding, obscurity and clarity. There is no such balance. Rather, standing on the threshold of his eye and ear, appreciating only the single moment, ignoring the human beings who people the world and are its most wonderful phenomena, he must always fight against a disintegration of his art, the tendency of his language to fall apart into its bare and senseless elements. His poetry, losing its control, becomes no poetry. Thus he has only one thin philosophical message—that life is real but chaotic —which he repeats over and over. Many of his poems, starting out to examine the world, go no further than to examine the process of examination, the nature of the act of poetry, the process by which the thing gives rise to the word. He loves nature enough to grasp its happy moments, but not understanding it, fears it. The personal fear rising out of ignorance, as to many romantic minds, becomes an anguish which he tries to make a tragic generalization.

This force of nature in action is
the major
Tragedy.

This contradiction within his art underlines a more important contradiction between his life and his attitude toward life, which we can properly call hypocrisy. For Stevens does not live by his philosophy, however passionately he may be convinced of it at such times as he is writing poetry. He is also a man living and playing a role in a real world, whose real arrangements he understands sufficiently well to take a part in them. The part he takes is a reactionary one, and while the images of the real world, the people with whom he deals, do not enter directly into his poetry, one can gauge this life from the ideas that enter his art. For although there can be neither progress nor reaction in the kind of chaos which he says is the world, he is an active propagandist for reaction. He has enemies. They are the people who believe the world can be understood, mastered, and helped along in its progress. He attacks the struggle for freedom:

Freedom is like a man who kills
himself
Each night, an incessant butcher.

He attacks the leader with a positive program:

He would be a lunatic of one idea
In a world of ideas.

This is certainly turning the truth upside down. For it is the man who understands and masters the world of people in society, seeing their variety and their interrelationships, who owns a variety of ideas. It is Stevens, the hedonist, accepting openly only the reality of the immediate moment, who is the lunatic of one idea.

In the closing poem, Stevens speaks to the soldier, telling him that the poet's contribution is as important as the soldier's:

How gladly with proper words
the soldier dies,
If he must, or lives on the bread
of faithful speech.

But Stevens offers no illumination of the world of people, which is the only "faithful speech" possible. His artistry is intricate, admirable and useful to poets, like the art of a feudal craftsman who pours into the handling of his medium all the imagination he cannot use for a mastery of the world. Stevens' is a feudal mind living in a world that for its own progress and freedom is trying to relegate the remnants of feudalism, among other things, into limbo.

That Man Wallace

THE WALLACES OF IOWA, *by Russell Lord. Houghton Mifflin. $5.*

With this book on Wallace and his family forbears, Russell Lord has performed a real service. He offers the best insight into Wallace's character and the most complete account of Wallace's heterogeneous activities as a scientist, editor, businessman and politician that has yet been published. While his study will be interesting even to casual readers, its careful documentation, providing a veritable arsenal of ammunition, will be particularly welcome to the seekers of facts and to progressive political writers who must answer the slanders put out by the yellow press. Though Mr. Lord himself claims to be only a journalist, he has turned in a research performance of a high order; throughout the whole 584 pages of the book one is impressed by the thoroughness with which the author has sought out the facts, the care with which he has checked them, and his use of first-hand quotations to prevent distortions which might otherwise arise in presenting the ideas of the Wallace family over a 100-year span.

E. Miller.

At the outset Mr. Lord says of the ex-Vice President, "I like and admire him greatly," and he adds, "I have, I think, been a somewhat objective and not altogether uncritical spectator of his growth." Nowhere, however, does Mr. Lord indicate the nature or extent of his criticisms. If he has any, whether they are from the Right or from the Left, he has kept them to himself. Nevertheless, he has succeeded in writing an honest, straightforward account of Wallace's development, including the social origins of his thinking, his role in the Roosevelt administration, and his course in the postwar period.

For many years Lord worked for the old *Farm & Fireside*, a Park Avenue farm journal, which was then edited by the reactionary Wheeler McMillen, currently the editor of Joseph Pew's *Farm Journal*. Mr. Lord joined Wallace in working for the Department of Agriculture during the early days of the New Deal, and he is now editor of *The Land*, a quarterly whose three-man editorial board includes Louis Bromfield, the Squire of Malibar Farm who now serves as a willing "farm" hand for the Hoover-NAM interests. Whether or not Mr. Lord's association with Park Avenue editors like McMillen, and fickle literary playboys like Bromfield, has contributed to his admiration for an honest, down-to-earth man like Wallace, he does not say. But throughout his book the reader is impressed by the essential and unswerving honesty that characterized the activities of four generations of Wallaces.

Unlike most political biographers, Mr. Lord has refrained from any at-

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tempt to cast his principal character in dramatic but mythical garb. He points out that many would-be politicos have tried to "handle" Wallace and get him to play a prearranged political role. But Wallace has always kicked over the traces. Even in the early days of crop curtailment he did not hesitate to voice doubt, as Secretary of Agriculture, about the policy of reduction in the midst of hunger; as a candidate for the vice-presidency he shocked the mealy-mouthed politicians by openly dubbing the GOP the "party of appeasement"; and as a member of the Truman Cabinet he proved to be the sharpest thorn in the sides of those who were betraying the Roosevelt program which they had promised to carry out. It is because Wallace has refused to be silent on issues of major importance to the American people that he is now most widely recognized as the heir apparent of the Roosevelt mantle.

Wherever Wallace has gone, he has made a point of talking to the people and seeing how they live. Sometimes this habit has been annoying to foreign dignitaries and to our State Department aides, who think that a gleaming white-starched shirt bosom should symbolize our representatives abroad. In Guayaquil, Ecuador, Wallace, as Vice-President, was whisked through the streets at full speed behind a cavalry contingent carrying lances and rifles, but at the end of the wild ride he stepped out of the official car and said to the governor of the province, "Let's see how the people live." The governor was greatly embarrassed as Wallace walked into one of the miserable hovels, where on the dirt floor lay a group of naked, filthy, half-starved children, and began talking to the people.

When Wallace first entered the Roosevelt Cabinet, he was essentially an agrarian rebel and did not then stand out as either the broadest or most ardent of the New Deal adherents. His refusal to recognize any difference between small and large farmers in applying the AAA program was a case in point. But he has continued to mature and develop.

As a democrat, in the best traditions of Jefferson and Lincoln, Wallace has shown a firm belief in the policy of taking the issues to the public. While many less stout-hearted supporters of the Roosevelt program have quietly folded their tents and some, like the Curmudgeon, are becoming crotchety dunderheads, Wallace has continued the fight and, by taking issues such as atomic energy and Greece to the people, he has dealt most telling blows against the forces seeking to betray the peace. Thus the man who, as the saying goes, "should have been President" when Roosevelt died, is generally hailed as the Number One spokesman for the pro-Roosevelt forces.

ROBERT DIGBY.

They Showed the Way

THE MANY AND THE FEW, *by Henry Kraus. Plantin Press.* $2.50.

"THE MANY AND THE FEW" is the exciting story of the sit-down strike of 1937 that ended the open shop and changed the face of America. It is a warm, human and truthful tale of the militant auto workers who defeated the biggest corporation in the world, told in swift-moving and dramatic prose that makes those great days live again.

Henry Kraus has written with the inside knowledge of one who served both as writer and fighter in that struggle. I saw him on the circular picket line on that fateful cold December night when the cops tried to evacuate the Fisher No. 2 plant and failed, in the now famous "Battle of Bull's Run."

What a corporation the auto workers defeated! General Motors owned everything in Flint — factories, jobs, judges, mayor, city and private police. It controlled the meeting halls, radio and newspapers. It operated a network of spies, ran Flint with an iron hand and exploited the workers to the limit of endurance. Those were the good old slave days to which General Motors would like to return by destroying the union through Red-baiting, internal friction and anti-labor legislation.

General Motors was beaten by the militancy, daring and unity of the auto workers and by their sit-down strike tactics. The workers overcame tremendous difficulties. The strike was many times in a critical condition because of insufficient preparation, the lack of a unified strike plan for the main General Motors centers and because of the disruptive work of Homer Martin, then president of the United Auto Workers-CIO, and his advisers, the Lovestone group (now working for David Dubinsky of the International Ladies Garment Workers). The

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workers used their newly-forged weapon—the sit-down—for all it was worth in order to meet the odds against them. They remained in the plants in the face of police attacks, injunctions, the presence of militia, the frenzied howls of reactionary papers and politicians and the threats of military force. All this the author portrays vividly, giving not only the mass of the workers but also the individual rank and file heroes of the struggle the honorable mention they well deserve.

The workers won also because of good leadership and sound policies. The national leadership of the auto workers at the time consisted of insurgent rank and file leaders, among them Addes, Mortimer, Thomas, Travis, Reuther, Hall and Martin. These leaders were not long from the shops and they were disgusted with the servile craft-bound policies of the American Federation of Labor leadership. They knew from sad experience that the auto plants could be organized only by new tactics and democratic organization. It was fortunate for the auto workers that Wyndham Mortimer and Robert Travis were picked by this leadership to organize the main stronghold of General Motors—Flint. Both convinced Left-wingers, Mortimer and Travis applied the principles of democratic unionism vigorously, unflinchingly and brilliantly at all stages of the struggle. They were energetically supported by all excepting the treacherous Homer Martin. Only such militant leadership and democratic unionism (which united the workers without regard to race, color, creed or political opinion) could have beaten this arrogant corporation.

The author gives a good account of the role played by Governor Frank Murphy in the strike. It was positive and progressive. Yet, how close he came to giving in before the pressure of big business and the reactionaries of his own party! The lesson of the imperative need of labor for an independent people's party veritably leaps from the pages of this story.

The book is not without weaknesses. In my opinion the author stuck too closely to a play-by-play account of the strike. He avoided much too rigidly the analysis of policies, groups and leaders which would have enabled the reader to grasp better the forces at work. After all, it is ten years since the strike. New problems confront the union and many persons have changed their roles.

The author fails, for example, to note the important role of the Left-wing Auto Workers Union, forerunner of the United Auto Workers, which kept a spark of struggle going in the auto plants for many years before the CIO appeared on the scene. He does not treat fully enough the contribution of the CIO itself, although he mentions Lewis often. His treatment of Lewis is not ample.

Lewis, who helped to organize the auto workers, was never favorable to democratic unionism. The fighting spirit of the auto workers was not the direct consequence of his policies. Lewis merely adjusted himself to the militant winds that blew over the country. Although at the time he played a progressive role, he nonetheless continued the role of absolute ruler in his own union. Where he had a free hand to set up new CIO organizations, he built them in his own autocratic image. One cannot favor progressive unionism on the one hand and follow non-democratic policies within the unions on the other. Sooner or later the contradiction must be resolved. Lewis did it by deserting the CIO.

Similarly the book should have pointed out that Walter Reuther, then a novice in union organization, took his leadership and militancy in the years 1936 and 1937 from the progressive elements with whom he worked at the time. Even then, he was often bolder in speech than in action. But he did not make the progressive policies fully his own. Since the strike he has shown a basic compromising streak and has steadily moved away from progressive unionism. He shows himself to be an opportunist leader who is clever at the use of demagogic phrases in order to cover up backsliding policies.

But the most important weakness is the author's failure to note, except by inference, the extremely valuable part played by the Communists in the strike.

Walter Moore and Bud Simons are rightly credited by the author with laying the foundation of unionism in Flint by their work in the Fisher No. 1 plant. Moore and Simons came to Flint after several years of rank-and-file organizing and strike experience in the Communist-led Auto Workers Union in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Moreover, Moore was Communist organizer for the city of Flint while working at Fisher's. The Communists within the plants, though small in

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number, worked tirelessly to organize union groups and to carry on the fight to improve conditions when such daring meant loss of job and the dreaded blacklist.

These shortcomings do not detract, however, from the essential value and interest of the book. It is invaluable for the new generation of workers who entered the unions in the past decade, as well as for other progressives. The book will give the reader added confidence in the American working class and its inherent ability not only to solve its present problems but to go forward to new social goals.

WILLIAM WEINSTONE.

Capsule

THE DANCE, *by John Martin. Tudor Publishing Co.* $3.75.

WRITTEN in the urbane and gracious style which has made the dance critic of the New York *Times* easy reading even for those who admit no special interest in the form, and profusely illustrated (266 plates), *The Dance* condenses into capsule form the "story" of the art, from a quick generalized survey of its early tribal and folk forms, through the dance as spectacle (ballet) and the dance as a means of communication (the modern dance), to an extremely inconclusive section on the dance in the technological era (television, films, etc.).

As is common with most current Baedekers for tourists in the art world, the interrelationship between prevailing art forms and the social-economic structure in any given period is more keenly examined in earlier historic eras than when the contemporary scene is under scrutiny. Then the critical vision, strangely, becomes blurred, and the generalizations vague. For example, in the discussion of the dance in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Mr. Martin correctly relates the changes in the content and style of the ballet with the many social reforms and ideological pressures occurring in the latter period: the impact of the French Revolution on man's thinking; the democratic upsurge in the nineteenth century and how it manifested itself in the types of dancing, the costumes, and the ballet librettos of the time.

In the discussion of twentieth century dance in America, however, this social frame of reference becomes amorphous and self-effacing. The creative processes and repertoire of Isadora Duncan, Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman and the generation that follows them are trotted out for review, but the kind of world in which they live and create and are forced to survive drops out of the picture. The modern dance has given us a whole body of dance experience, a vast gallery of portraits of modern man (and woman) torn by frustration and neuroses, in constant conflict with society, the subconscious, the past. We are told of the search for a technique by which dances can express and communicate these emotional states to their audience. Yet nowhere is there an attempt made to relate this preoccupation of man in conflict to those social forces today which not only impinge on and shape the thinking of the artist and his creation but directly influence the receptivity and cultural predisposition of the audience.

It doesn't matter whether this is a conscious or unconscious default by Mr. Martin. The fact remains that, though he chooses to frame the dance throughout the centuries within its proper historical and social setting, he surveys the modern dance almost solely through the subjective intentions of its outstanding personalities and analyzes them mainly in terms of their respective contributions to its form. And even here, form in the modern dance is treated as a product of an immaculate conception, falsely isolated from the uninfluenced by parallel trends in painting, music, literature.

What follows, significantly, is the complete omission of any discussion whatsoever of the turbulent period of the Thirties, when the dance world was in ferment. The Center Theater, the Hippodrome, mass meetings of thousands, were jam-packed for dancers. There were several dance organizations, nationally-affiliated dance groups, dance festivals, contests, a successful fight for a federally-subsidized dance project. Nor was the ferment limited to one art. This dynamic picture obtained also for theater, music, painting, literature. Why? Because, to follow Mr. Martin's own definition to its logical conclusion, the people had rediscovered the arts as a means of communication, and many artists had rediscovered their cultural base.

Certainly any book on the modern dance which neglects to so much as mention the left-wing inspired dance

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movement of the Thirties, and its challenge which rocked the entire dance world, has seriously failed in its obligation to its readers. It cannot be an accident that Anna Sokolow, who as choreographer and innovator is the peer of at least twenty other dancers discussed or photographed in the book, doesn't appear anywhere in its pages.

A definite imbalance is also apparent in the selection and placement of photographs. They are interspersed throughout without any noticeable effort to relate them to corresponding text or to give them a continuity of their own.

The Dance may very well be an inoffensive addition to anyone's dance library; it is by no means an indispensable one.

FRANCIS STEUBEN.

From Garrison to Reed

CRITICS AND CRUSADERS, *by Charles A. Madison. Holt.* $3.50.

WITH Mr. Madison's thesis, that "the quest for freedom has been a basic characteristic of the American people from the very beginning," there can be no quarrel, though one might add that the seekers are confined to no particular nation. Admirable is his insistence upon the fact that human rights have been expanded by conscious struggle; that what gains man has made, *he* has made, himself, and that these have come only after long and bitter effort. Of very great value, too, particularly at this moment, is the demonstration that runs through the fabric of this work of the native, indigenous quality of radicalism to the history of the United States.

To accomplish his reevaluation of the social history of America's past century, Mr. Madison has chosen the method of delineating key personalities. Thus, one is presented with sketches of the careers of a trio of characters under each of six categories: the Abolitionists—Garrison, Brown and Phillips; the Utopians—Fuller, Brisbane and Bellamy; the Anarchists—Thoreau, Benjamin Tucker and Goldman; the Dissident Economists—George, Brooks Adams and Veblen; the Militant Liberals—Altgeld, Steffens and Bourne; the Socialists—De Leon, Debs and Reed.

While this technique probably enhances readability it sacrifices profundity. Indeed, it is manifestly impossible, within five hundred pages, to interpret adequately eighteen personalities of the stature here dealt with, let alone attempt to place them, properly, within their milieu and to give the reader any comprehensive conception of the objective forces and conditions within which and upon which they were operating. Covering so variegated a subject matter one faces, too, the clear danger not only of over-simplifying, but also of committing factual errors. And, as Professor Allan Nevins has pointed out, with ill-concealed delight, this work does not altogether escape either pitfall.

Nevertheless, this reviewer feels the book is of positive value. It does present, smoothly and succinctly, the essential biographical data concerning American men and women who, despite calumny, slander and, in some cases, outright martyrdom, made contributions toward the swelling stream of protest against exploitation and its offspring—brutality, greed, deception, cynicism. It does demonstrate the grass-roots quality of that protest. And it quite explicitly affirms that the reviled and slandered of our time—including the Communists who, says Mr. Madison, "more than any other one agency," led the contemporary fight against Nazism and fascism—are continuing America's healthiest traditions.

Comparing this with what commercial presses are spewing forth these days makes one bid welcome to *Critics and Crusaders.*

HERBERT APTHEKER.

Bantu, Boer & Briton

STRUGGLE ON THE VELD, *by Roderick Peattie. Vanguard Press.* $3.50.

DR. PEATTIE has set down impressions he gathered during a year's stay in South Africa as director of OWI activities. The book is unpretentious and makes no claim to providing either exhaustive or authoritative information. It is a combination of travelogue, factual reporting and tentative analysis.

Dr. Peattie is at his best in the travelogue sections. He has a keen sensitivity to place and atmosphere. In a breezy and personalized style he succeeds in giving one the feel of South Africa's principal cities and of the veld country. On the side of fact and analysis Dr. Peattie ranges widely but somewhat sketchily over South Africa's politics, economics, sociology and history. He understands and gives due emphasis

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to the key question underlying all other problems in South Africa: "Everything in the Union comes back to the single question, the progress that shall be allowed the native." He places in proper focus the key issue of possession of the land, which has passed from African to European, and the "doctrine of cheap labor as a basis for all South African economy" and upon which is built "the South African theory of Herrenvolk."

Although the picture painted by Dr. Peattie is correct in its broad outlines, there are several faulty details, some of them quite serious. For example, he has a habit of using over-much the words "savage" and "savagery" in speaking of the Bantu people. He acknowledges at one point, "exactly what a savage is, I do not know," and says it means no more perhaps than "one lacking civilized comforts and security." But this is not the sense in which the average reader understands such words and it is not the sense in which the author himself uses them in all instances. For example, he represents the ruthless cruelty of King Chaka as typical of "savagery" which "European imperialism" (*sic*) has helped to eradicate.

The writer repeatedly makes the point that the Bantu has not yet advanced far beyond his "savage" state. He knows or at least says nothing about organized mass movements such as the African National Congress and the Non-European Council of Trade Unions. Like the white rulers of South Africa themselves, he attributes to "white agitators" whatever spirit of dissatisfaction and revolt there is among African workers in the mines. Also, like Smuts and his class, he believes that the policy of segregation between races is the only sensible one for South Africa, and that the granting of political power to the African majority would result in a "black fascism."

It is unfortunate that there are these shortcomings in a book which otherwise could be recommended as an entertaining and informative study of the land of gold and poverty. It seems that the author has attempted to tell as much of the truth as possible while remaining on friendly terms with the South African ruling class. It is significant that wherever he finds it necessary to condemn racial oppression and discrimination in South Africa, one of the major outposts of fascist ideology, he is careful to note that his own United States is not without similar evils.

ALPHAEUS HUNTON.

Eyewitness Report by

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

Chairman, Communist Party, U.S.A.

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sights and sounds

THE CLEVER BREED

British film makers are shrewd propagandists for the status quo, as evidenced by two recent films.

By JOSEPH FOSTER

BRITISH film makers are very clever —clever enough, apparently, to mesmerize American film critics. Hardly had the shouts died down over *This Happy Breed* (Little Carnegie) than hats once more sailed skyward, this time to the huzzahs that greeted *Odd Man Out* (Criterion). This latter film has been hailed, with frenetic energy, as the best film since the war, a worthy successor to *The Informer*, the most brilliant achievement of the British film industry, etc., etc. Yet, despite obvious technical skill, I found this film to be, on one level, a glittering, pretentious fraud, and on another, a contemner of Irish freedom movements.

A preface warns that the film has no intention of dealing authoritatively with an illegal organization and its struggles. It has only in mind the people caught up in the circumstances created by this struggle. Note the phrase "caught up." The people of the film are not only the chance characters that fill out the lists of *dramatis personae*, but are for a large part the members of this illegal organization, presumably the Irish Republican Army. Thus they are drawn against their will into miserable activity, victims apparently of a malignant fate, involved in situations that inevitably doom them to failure and death.

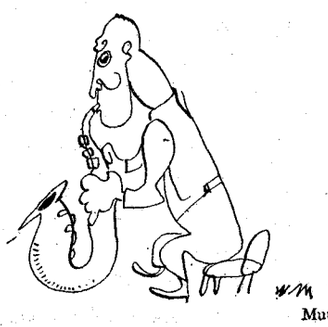
So much for the will and intelligence and free choice of the revolutionary leaders. As for the pretense of investigating the interactions of the characters involved, no such thing ever occurs. To begin with, the men of the IRA are either dolts or cowards. The organization plans to rob a mill in order to obtain funds for its work. In a crudely-motivated scene, the leader kills a man and is himself seriously wounded. While some of his pals pick him up, others start the car before he is completely in it. The car is driven so fast that he is unable to climb in, and finally he drops off. The others debate the question of going back for him and finally drive off without him. His subsequent efforts to escape the police become the nub of the drama.

In addition to such goings-on, the men reveal sufficient stupidity to guarantee their death or at least capture. It is thus the leader against the world, a world of Irish citizens supposedly acquainted with the history and aims of the Irish fight for independence. But not one citizen betrays the slightest knowledge or interest in it, or allows his behavior to be influenced by it. The audience knows in a general way what the hunted man represents, but the ideas are never mentioned in connection with the people who come into contact with him. Thus there is no ethical yardstick provided for the so-called investigation of social behavior where this particular kind of murderer is involved. A couple find him and bring him to their home. They discover that he is the man being hunted by the police. The woman argues that he cannot be handed over because he is wounded and maybe dying. The husbands points out that he has murdered a man in cold blood, and their duty is clear. All murders are alike. Apply this type of ethical judgment to all situations and the patriots of a resistance movement become indistinguishable from gangsters. That is probably what the British rulers want the world to believe, whether in relation to Ireland or Greece.

Thus the film is clear in its efforts to discredit the Irish republican movement; but lest some doubt still lingers in a mind here and there, several scenes are included to point up the purpose. An old crone tells the leader's girl that she too once loved a rebel, but when he disappeared she did not go out to look for him. Instead she married and had eleven fine children. The film talks at length about faith as a solution to social problems; the dying leader himself assumes a mystical expression and wishes that he had listened more carefully to the credo of faith as expounded by the preacher. Shades of Connally, Pearce and Larkin!

In order to put over this bogus profundity, the film is constructed out of the best available technical material. There is no gainsaying the effective realistic lighting, the surface realism of wet streets and human suffering, the free fluid camera style. In ordinary chase films, the technique utilized by Hitchcock, and here used brilliantly by his former assistant, Carol Reed, is always good for sustained suspense. But in *Odd Man Out*, since the characters are as insubstantial as the shadows they move in, and the dialogue as false as the arguments of British imperialism, all this technical ability produces neither suspense, horror nor pity.

"THIS HAPPY BREED" is a frank plea for the status quo. It is another Noel Coward cavalcade of English social history from the end of the First World War to the beginning of the second. It deals with that breed of petty-bourgeoisie which is apparently ordained to follow certain patterns of life until the end of time. It is far cleverer than our own films that argue for a preservation of the status quo, because it admits (a) that there are plenty of things wrong with society, and (b) that the heroes and heroines of the film, the John Does and Plain Janes, are as prone to errors of judgment as they are to right thinking and manifestations of sterling character. They are as believable, consequently, as the angry sounds that come from



Mutch.

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your next door apartment. Such plausibility confirms the prejudices of the audience, and once such rapport is established the propaganda soaks in effortlessly. The characters know joy, sorrow, petty bickering; fall prey to spirit mediums; die in accidents, from overwork and excessive worry; marry, beget children; hate and forgive each other at least once a day; and through it all follow the fortunes of Empire with proper concern and abiding loyalty, as though their interest in imperialism were as natural as any of the others. When the two main characters, fathers of the families that are models of the happy breed, serve as strikebreakers in the general strike of '27, they are pictured as merely lending a hand in a crisis. And to lend a hand in a crisis is one of the sturdiest qualities of all. They believe in improving conditions, but only gradually, because you can't change human nature. One of the potential sons-in-law is a brash, hot-headed revolutionary, making everybody uncomfortable and succeeding only in getting a few heads broken. But when he marries, he soon gets over such nonsense. Now burdened with the responsibilities of adult life, he no longer has any time for such frivolous behavior. As Hilaire Belloc (or someone) put it: He who is not a socialist at twenty has no heart; he who is still a socialist at forty has no head.

Rebel if you like, sow your wild oats when you are young, but when you grow up, then, by Churchill (or Bevin), support the capitalist system for all it is worth, because while not perfect, it is the best we have yet devised.

"THE SMASH-UP" (Capitol) shows what happens to a wealthy woman with time on her hands, while *Calcutta* (Paramount) is concerned with jewel thieves, murder, sinister Oriental characters and Alan Ladd. Both are routine Hollywood crud.

"OUR LAN'"

DURING General Sherman's occupation of Georgia, liberated Negroes were authorized to take up forty-acre farmsteads. *Our Lan'*, a remarkable new play by Theodore Ward, deals with a group of freed Negro farmers who staked out their claims on an island off the Georgia coast. Virtually bare-handed, they raised homes, plowed the land and brought in a good crop. They were on the point of fulfilling their dream of working their own land in freedom and dignity.

But in the capitalist North the chime of money outrang the bells of freedom. Northern mill-owners found it profitable to make common exploiters' terms with the former planters. Their cause was served by the Tennesseean Andrew Johnson. Succeeding the murdered Lincoln, the new President vetoed the Stevens bill that would have legitimatized the land grants to the Negroes. By this act he destroyed the economic foundation of Emancipation and made inevitable the peonage and social degradation that first victimized the Negroes and ended by impoverishing and degrading the entire South.

What we have in *Our Lan'* is this piece of tragic American history feelingly realized in individual lives. There are in it a score of other historical lessons besides—of the land economy needed to give freedom living substance, of class relations among Negroes themselves as well as with the various classes of whites; of the capitalist fixation on property values and their destruction of life values. All are given dramatic illustration so emotionally perceptive and true that the lessons are learned, as it were, through the senses. There is not a didactic breath in the entire play.

Its action follows a simple narrative curve. Its end is as foreknown as that of a Greek tragedy, and the dramatic space in between is as charged with tension. The farmers are shown gathering around a man of singular courage and strength, a middle-aged blacksmith named Joshua Tain. Without formalities they elect him their leader. They are then shown through hopes and discouragement, through their reactions to local happenings and to events at Washington that determine their fate. We see them when the happy news of Lee's surrender is received, and then the prostrating news of the assassination of "father Abraham"; when news of the passage of the Stevens bill confirming their rights to the land raises their hearts, to be followed by the shock of Johnson's veto. With grim haste the veto is followed by the Yankee soldiers, now acting in the planters' interest and come to dispossess the Negro farmers. Finally there is the doomed resistance undertaken not in hope of winning

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Established 1936

VOLUME XI, NUMBER 2

SPRING 1947

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but in a defiant demonstration of human dignity.

A sub-plot involving the middle-aged widower Tain and the girl Delphine is remarkable for its moving tenderness and its emotional truth. Only in the characterization of the shifty young upper-class Ollie, spoiled son of a freedman, and in the sketchy handling of the white overseer and planter, does the characterization fall from the fresh and individualized handling of the rest into the conventional. Themes like *Our Lan'* are usually so schematized, figures like Joshua are usually so stiffened into monuments, that Ward's achievement in keeping the situation always in living terms and his hero, Tain, always human has the effect of a phenomenon.

Furthermore, Ward is never fearful of being poetic, of heightening emotional expression. The poetry adds a dimension often lacking in the hard-edged, inhibited naturalism of the contemporary theater. It is remarkable with what simplicity and rightness he uses the spiritual resources of singing and Biblical allusion. He uses them in the drama as they were used in life, to help surmount its crises. The beautiful and apt singing and the bits of poetry bring the play to relieving emotional crests.

The young dramatists' group, the Associated Playwrights, who have already produced a number of interesting pieces, climaxed their work with this production. If Broadway producers are as keenly on the lookout for new plays and playwrights as they are said to be, they haven't far to go. They could hardly serve the theater better than by making *Our Lan'* available to the general public.

In a production that deserves blanket praise one must pay particular respects to William Veasey for his truly magnificent performance as Joshua Tain; Muriel Smith for her Delphine, Luther Henderson for his Daddy Sykes, Estelle Evans for her old Sarah. And, of course, respectful mention should be made of Edward R. Mitchell's staging and designing and Joshua Lee's musical arrangements.

IT IS a satisfaction, to this reviewer, to record the fact that Arthur Miller's *All My Sons* received the Critics' Circle Award as the year's best American play. The Circle's citation went to *All My Sons* "because of the frank and uncompromising presentation of a timely and important theme; because of the honesty of the writing and the cumulative power of the scenes; and because it reveals a genuine instinct for the theater in an intelligent and thoughtful playwright."

I cannot understand, however, what different standards are presumed for musicals which made *Brigadoon* the choice over *Call Me Mister* or *Finian's Rainbow.*

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

RECORDS

TWO new albums illustrate the variety of idiom possible to American music. Alan Hovhaness uses rhythmic and melodic patterns from old Armenian music to create an extraordinarily lovely and fresh-sounding piano music, sometimes exploiting the timbres of the piano alone, sometimes adding drums and gongs. In the same album are two fine little works by John Cage, who also uses Oriental patterns and a subtle combination of melody and percussion, writing for pianos that he adapts in order to provide the variety of sounds he wants. The gifted performer is Maro Ajemian. This is an important contribution to contemporary music. My only reservation is to the use of mystical titles, dedications to ancient gods, unnecessary and meaningless today. The value of this music is that it is a useful part of our contemporary world (Disc 875). Elie Siegmeister's "American Sonata," performed by himself, uses hints of jazz and American folk melody. It is more ambitious in emotional scope than the above works, but Siegmeister is not quite up to so big a task, not entirely successful. A sonata should be as broad as it is long. Its inner life is its conflict, expressed through harmonic contrasts and counterpoint. Siegmeister spins only a single line of melody, with perfunctory accompaniment. The result is an engaging and often moving work, but with some dead wood (Disc 773).

"Songs We Remember," sponsored by the Veterans of the Lincoln Brigade, offers four beautiful Spanish folk songs, an Asturian choral piece—sounding almost like an old Hebraic chant—a band piece from Catalonia, a piece from Galicia for children's voices, and a flamenco from Seville. Probably no people have gone through more agony in the last century and a half than the

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Spanish, and the story can almost be heard in the searing, unsentimental quality of this folk music (Disc 720). A similar quality is found in the "Flamenco" album sung by Soledad de Miralles, with Carlo Montoya's guitar, one of the best albums of such music I have heard (Disc 721).

The Concert Hall Society introduces the subscription idea into recordings, and its announcement lists a most interesting group of old and contemporary works. Unfortunately the limited editions and high prices which the society finds necessary make this worthwhile cultural adventure possible only to the luxury class of collectors.

Three non-subscription works offered to the general public, and more reasonably priced, show a remarkable faithfulness of recorded sound.

The Grieg Sonata in A Minor for cello and piano is only partially successful music, combining singing Norwegian melodies with academicisms. It is well played by Raya Garbousova and Arthur Balsom. Beethoven's Irish Songs, sung by Richard Dyer-Bennett with trio accompaniment, are interesting. The instrumental accompaniments are recognizably Beethoven, yet adroitly fitted to the folk music. Prokofieff's "Music for Children" consists of twelve pieces for young fingers and are a thoroughly delightful introduction to the modern idiom. The excellent pianist is Ray Lev.

S. FINKELSTEIN.

Palestine

(*Continued from page* 17)

of Palestine. His proposed solution of the Palestine issue—partition—is an old British imperialist project. The Palestine Royal Commission of 1937, which advocated partition of Palestine into small Jewish and Arab zones, revealed the real character of this solution when it noted: "The problem cannot be solved by giving either the Arabs or the Jews all they want. The answer to the question of which of them will in the end govern Palestine must be 'Neither.' " This is the essence of partition, and the essence of the Anglo-American position on Palestine. In contrast, the Communists along with other progressives support a free Palestine governed jointly by Jews and Arabs within a democratic framework which secures and advances the rights of both peoples.

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